A Criticism on Ven. Ñāṇavīra's 'Notes on Dhamma (1960-1965)' And Some Additional Notes

Bhikkhu Vanaratana Khemaka

A Criticism on Ven. Ñāṇavīra's 'Notes on Dhamma (1960-1965)'

And Some Additional Notes

by

Bhikkhu Vanaratana Khemaka

Dedicated to the simple villagers of rural Sri Lanka, whose kind support allows me to make effort in the holy life (even though they would not make anything out of this book written in a foreign language)

First edition (online): December 2021
Second edition (online): February 2023

Copyright information

One may copy, reformat, republish and redistribute this work in any medium whatsoever, provided that: (1) such copies are made available free of charge; and (2) changes and other misrepresentations be avoided.

ALL COMMERCIAL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Contents

Preface 5

Abbreviations 7

Prologue 9

WORLD 15

RŪPA 19

ANICCATĀ 24

SAṄKHĀRA 27

DHAMMA 34

AKĀLIKA 37

PAṬICCASAMUPPĀDA 40

NIBBĀNA 67

VIÑÑĀṆAṂ ANIDASSANAṂ 75

BHAVA 78

PARAMATTHASACCA 79

NA CA SO 82

PAÑCUPĀDĀNAKKHANDHĀ AND VIÑÑĀṆA-NĀMARŪPA 83

BĀHIYOVĀDA 85

ARIYASĀVAKA 87

63RD VIEW 90

UPADHI 91

PAPAÑCA 91

NO CASSA 92

ANTARĀBHAVA 96

TISSO APĀYĀ 98

EPILOGUE 100

APPENDIX 101

1. A LETTER ON **PAṬICCASAMUPPĀDA** 101
2. A NOTE ON GOD 105

Preface

First of all, it should be admitted that **ven. Ñaṇavīra** is a very intelligent person. That of course does not mean that he is essentially right and that we have to believe everything he has said. One can be misled even by 'accepting a view after careful consideration' (**diṭṭhinijjhānakkhanti:** AN 3.2.2.5, 337) (many philosophers have been so). 'Note on Dhamma' is an exquisite piece of work of human intelligence and there are many places where we can agree with. Let those places be; but for a student of Dhamma today, what needs is an accurate guidance so that he or she would not be misled, so that he (or she, which should be understood) would easily reach the goal, which is what he is seeking by following the teaching of Buddha. So this work would not be just a criticism but will commend what should be commended and will provide alternative explanations for those **ven. Ñaṇavīra's** explanations seem unsatisfactory. Additional notes will also be given on certain subjects that **ven. Ñaṇavīra** haven't touched.

The main purpose of this work is to warn the reader to keep an open mind, if not, as he proceeds forward after avoiding the traditionalist pit, he might elegantly fall into the '**Ñaṇavīrist**' pit. Since understanding and knowledge are bound to be changed with time, it is possible that the author himself may later find what he has written down here as wrong and unacceptable. So, there is no need for the reader to take what comes in this booklet as true and final, but should always keep the words of the Buddha (i.e., suttas) as the final authority.

It is to the credit of Path Press Publications that a new phase of '**Ñaṇavīra** enthusiasm' has begun - which is indeed a good thing for Dhamma is perceptible only to the inquisitive mind. Notes may

appeal to some westerners on the ground that they reject the tradition. But justice should be made. It can be asserted that about 90% of what come in the commentaries are in fact correct. Some **gathās** that come in **thera-therigāthā, Dhammapada, Sagāthavagga** etc. would have been completely incomprehensible if not for the commentary. The problem with the commentary is that it gives some wrong interpretations on some vital points in Dhamma. These need to be corrected. (Some people reject the commentaries without even reading them (i.e., not knowing what they contain). In other words, they reject something that they don't know of).

The main purpose of 'Notes on Dhamma' was to explain **paṭiccasamuppāda** according to its authors understanding. Since this author find this explanation not agreeable ('wrong' is the word that should be used, but it's highly subjective) he will propound a different explanation. So **paṭiccasamuppāda will** naturally be the main topic of this writing as well. Unlike Notes, first the terms will be discussed before discussing **paṭiccasamuppāda,** so this and **Nibbāna** would be the climax and then an anti-climax will follow. This writing is intended for the Dhamma practitioners, not the scholars, so this will not be a scholastic work. When referring to the suttas, in some places the method used by **ven. Ñānavira** will be used, but in other places sutta name, the book and the sutta number will be given with the page number as they come in the Buddha Jayanti Edition (which is the only edition to which I have access right now). Since English is not my first language, nor I'm an expert in it, there will be many language errors, but they will not prevent the reader from understanding the meaning (which is the important thing). So the reader will have to bear those errors and is expected to be sympathetic towards the author. English translations of SN and MN suttas are mostly quoted from ven.

Bodhi's 'The Connected Discourses of the Buddha' and ven. **Ñāṇamoli**'s and ven. Bodhi's 'Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha'.

Finally I would like to express my deep gratitude to two remarkable monks that I have met in my life, to whom I'm indebted for my understanding of **Dhamma**. They are **ven.Ñāṇdīpa thero** and **ven.kaṭukurunde Ñāṇananda thero**, but the content in this writing will differ much from their points of views.

Bhikkhu Khemaka

Sri Lanka
27-10-2021

Abbreviations

AN-**Anguttara nikāya**

DN- **Dīgha nikāya**

K**ñ**- Ven**. (Kaṭukurunde) Ñāṇananda** Thero

MN- **Majjhima nikāya**

Ñd- Ven. (Denmark) **Ñāṇadipa** Thero

Ñv- Ven. (England) **Ñāṇavīra** Thero

Sn- **Sutta Nipāta**

SN-**Saṃyutta nikāya**

Tg- **Theragāthā**

Ud- **Udāna**

Sabbadiṭṭhipahānāya – yaṃ saddammaṃ adesayi

Anukampaṃ upādāya – taṃ namassāmi Gotamaṃ[1]

For the abandonment of all views

For which that good Dhamma was taught

Out of compassion

To that Gotama, I pay my homage!

[1] **Pāli** translation of the v.27.30 of **Mūlamadyamakārikā**. Even though we cannot agree with **Nāgarjuna's** view expressed in this book, this last verse is indeed correct.

Prologue

When humans meet up with things that they can't understand they make up theories to explain (or more correctly - explain away) them. This is true from the very primitive man to the sophisticated scientists of today. When these theories (with time) transform to be the norm (or when they become widely accepted) they become the truth (the reality). Thus the unknown has been transformed in to a known. The mystery has been solved. The most widely accepted (and possibly the oldest) such 'truth' is the concept (or theory) of God. From this the man of old age was able to solve many of the mysteries that laid beyond his comprehension such as rain, drought, earthquakes, volcano eruptions, deceases, birth and death (and people still continue to use it). When the theory becomes the 'truth' many rights and rituals were also developed. Most of such theories are not correct and they fall in to mysticism. Science is not void of mysticism either. The unconscious (or subconscious) which has become a norm in psychology is nothing but pure mysticism in science[1].

[1] **Samanera Bodheseko** writes: "what is this 'unconscious'? Are we conscious of it? If so, then on what grounds can it be regarded as unconscious? If not, then how do we know it exists, except as a (conscious) conceptualization? But despite this simple objection the notion of the 'unconscious' is widely and uncritically accepted presumably because it is the sort of explanation that people **want** to accept"

(**Bodheseko, sāmanera**: The collected essays of **Sāmanera Bodheseko,** path press publications, 2011)

Every person feels the existence of a self-same 'self' in his every experience. When he sits back and think about it, he validates this feeling by memory which seems to persist in time: 'so it was me who had lunch yesterday with so and so. It was me who visited such and such places last year'. Memory is the witness for a continues self. The character of a person also doesn't seem to change over time: 'oh! He is a real cunning fellow; he was like that even when he was a boy'; so the questions arise; 'who is this me? where does the memory lie (to remember what I did yesterday those memories should be stored up somewhere)? How do the character traits remain unchanged over time? The theory that was postulated to explain all these is the 'theory of soul'. Now the question arises, what is this soul?

If the memory is stored up in the brain (as modern science assure us), in the brain cells or in the complex connections among the cells, then it is not possible for us to forget anything. If forgetting does occur because of the death of brain cells or due to the changes occurring in the inter-connections of brain cells, then it is not possible for us to remember something that has been forgotten. If the character of a person is determined by the brain cells it should be possible to do a brain surgery and remove the 'bad' cells and make him of a pure character without any selfishness, avarice, stinginess, anger, hate, conceit, foolishness and so on. But even a person with little brain can understand that we cannot remove defilements of the mind with a brain surgery. So, science (or materialism) cannot provide any helpful answers to the above questions.

Now what is a person? When we speak of a person (or an individual) what we mean is a unit made of a body (**rūpaṃ**), Feelings (**vedanā**), perceptions (**saññā**),

thoughts (**Saṅkhārā**) and consciousness (**Viññāṇa**) (some may object to the use of the above **Pāli** words in the given meanings, but let's just assume for the moment that they are so). There is nothing more or nothing less. If there is a soul (or self) then it should be one of these (identical or be within them) or a few of them. Everyone can know by his own experience (just as the Buddha has pointed out) that these things don't last long. The body may last for some time, but the other four changes (or vanishes) very quickly. Since the soul cannot change or vanish like that we fail to assume any one of above as a self. We also cannot observe, feel or come to know of any other thing (other than the above five) that exists within a person. Then if there truly is a soul, then it is a thing that I can never come to know of. If it can be never known, then it simply doesn't exist (its same as a non-existing thing).

Let us now consider the Upanishadic teaching of the soul (**Ātman**). They say the soul is a joyous (or pleasant) thing. It necessarily has to be explained in such a way or otherwise the liberation (moksha) and the effort put forth to achieve that liberation would be worthless. And it will also not be possible to describe the joy felt in deep **samādhi** (concentration or more accurately 'one pointedness of mind'). It is taught that the liberation can be achieved by realising this **Ātman**. But this soul is not within any of the above five. If it's not within these five, as pointed out earlier, such a thing cannot exist. But let's put aside this objection for the moment and assume that there is a soul hidden deep within the mind. If this joyful soul is the nuclear or the foundation of the mind then the mind built on or around the joyous soul should also be joyful. It is not possible for sorrow or sadness to arise in this joyous mind. But this is far from reality. Just like a person who is sad in one occasion can later be happy because his state of mind has changed, in the same manner

when someone attains deep **samādhi** joy arise in him because his state of mind has now changed. There is no way for us to validate that this is a meeting up with the soul. There is no proof that such an incident took place. On the other hand, who met with this **Ātman**? Was there another soul that went deep in to the mind to meet the other soul? Let's assume that what happened was through meditation the defiling layers that covered the joyous soul got removed, if so, since now the defiling covers have been removed even after coming out of the **samādhi** that person should continuously feel that same joyous sensation. There is no need for him to go back to that **samādhi** and it is not possible for sadness to arise in his mind again. But the truth is very different to this. So, this meditation experience is nothing but another experience (definitely a much better experience than a sensual one) and has nothing to do with a soul ('**tadipi phassa paccayā**' - 'that too is because of contact': DN 1).

If a soul exists (in whatever the form it may be) there are two essential features that it has to have.

1. It should be static, unchanging and permanent. If it is in the nature of changing. Then we have to say the soul disappeared, another arose and then it too disappeared.
2. The soul within me should be 'mine'. If it's not mine then there is nothing for me to do with it. It must belong to someone else. If it is mine, it should be in the way I want it to be, or else it couldn't be mine. (If the cloths that I wear are mine then I can wash them or throw them away or burn them. But I cannot do that for someone else's cloths, simply because they are not mine).

But how can I exert control over something that I cannot even find? Even if we consider the body, feelings, perception, thoughts and consciousness as my Self, I have no real control over them. Even if I say to my body not to get old. It will undergo the senile decay; even I tell my thoughts (mind) not think about sensualities, sometimes when my mindfulness slips away sensual thoughts arise. Since those five aggregates are in the nature of arising and passing away we find ourselves again being deprived of the soul that we were seeking. So, we find this belief or theory of a soul as unsatisfactory.

What did the Buddha teach? What is his teaching is all about? In his own words: "earlier and also now monks, it's only the suffering (dukkha) and its cessation that I teach" (MN 22). (To achieve the cessation of suffering first we have to understand what suffering is. To cure a disease, we must first learn what the disease is. To find a solution to a problem we must understand the problem first). So, this is all that he teaches. He was not interested in teaching anything more than that.

What causes the arising of suffering? It was said to be 'the craving that leads to rebirth accompanied with delight and attachment, that delights in every place (of being), that is to say: craving for sensual pleasures, craving to be, craving not to be' (**Dhammacakkappavattana sutta**). Out of these three the strongest and the most basic is the craving to be (One can easily come to know this when he faces a danger, where his life is threatened). While craving is the main cause for suffering, it also happens to be the main cause for rebirth (thus prolonging the suffering to an unknown length of time in to the future). Craving provides the fuel for rebirth to take place. Those who has thirst for sensual pleasures are born in the sensual (**kāma**) plain, those who have got rid of craving for sensual

pleasures but still have longing for forms are born in the plain of forms (**rūpa**), those who have thirst for the formless are born in the formless (**arūpa**) plain. If someone can get rid of his yearning to 'be' in whatever form (i.e., **kāma, rūpa** and **arūpa**), he has got rid of the reason to be born again. Since the fuel to 'be' has got depleted, craving has ceased, he will not go for a birth again.

What causes the arising of craving? It's nescience (or ignorance), it's the 'self (soul) view' born of nescience. As long as there is nescience there will be the 'self-view' (**Attānudiṭṭhi**); as long as there is the 'self-view' there will be craving; as long as there is craving there will be suffering. So, to get rid of suffering we have to get rid of nescience. To do that, we have to give rise to science and to do that, we have to develop wisdom. Buddha's teaching concentrates on this point only, and it stops right there. Anything beyond this is considered unnecessary. Speculations like 'where is memory stored, where does character traits lie, where does **kamma** get stored, what is material and with what is it made of, how does change take place, is it flux or discrete change, how did the universe begin', are all treated as unnecessary and useless. Why? Because they are not related to the very basic problem that we have to deal with: suffering. When such questions were asked Buddha simply ignored them (see MN 63, p 152). Instead of answering them he taught **paṭiccasamuppāda** to get rid of the 'self-view' and to end the suffering.

WORLD

In order to understand the teaching of Buddha it is a cardinal issue to understand what is meant by the word 'world' (which is the term used to mean the 'universe') within his teaching (i.e., **Dhammavinaya**). So, what is the world? Buddha explains: 'in this fathom long body with perception itself I define the world' (**Rohitassa sutta,** SN I 2.3.6, 118)

How come that be? **Ven. Ānanda** explains; 'by which friend, there is perception and measuring (i.e., knowledge) of the world, that is called the world in this noble teaching. With what friend, there is perception and measuring of the world? By eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind (**mano**).' (**Lokantagamana sutta,** SN IV 1.12.3, 196)

So, it is these six (not five) senses bases themselves are called world. Why are they called the world? Because we come to know of the world because of them.

'In the six the world is born
In the six acquaintance is made' (**loka sutta,** SN I 1.7.10, 76)

So if the six sense bases exist, a world exist, if they cease, the world ceases, as it is explained here:

"Venerable sir, it is said, 'the world, the world.' In what way, venerable sir, might there be the world or the description of the world?"

"Where there is the eye, Samiddhi, where there are forms, eye-consciousness, things to be cognized by eye-consciousness, there the world exists or the description of the world.

"Where there is the ear … the mind, where there are mental phenomena, mind-consciousness, things to be cognized by mind-consciousness, there the world exists or the description of the world.

"Where there is no eye, Samiddhi, no forms, no eye-consciousness, no things to be cognized by eye-consciousness, there the world does not exist nor any description of the world.

"Where there is no ear … no mind, no mental phenomena, no mind-consciousness, no things to be cognized by mind-consciousness, there the world does not exist nor any description of the world."

(**samiddhilokapañhasutta**, SN III, 1.7.6, 88)[1]

So, this is what meant by the arising of the world and the cessation of the world. If there are the six sense bases then there is a world, with the arising of the six sense bases the world arises, with the cessation of them the world ceases. Buddha never went on to speak of the arising and the cessation of the external world.

"This world, Kaccāna, for the most part depends upon a duality—upon the notion of existence and the notion of nonexistence. But for one who sees the origin of the world as it really is with correct wisdom, there is no notion of nonexistence in regard to the world. And for one who sees the cessation of the world as it really is with correct wisdom, there is no notion of existence in regard to the world."

(**Kaccānagotta sutta**, SN II 1.2.5, 28)[1]

[1] Bodhi, Bhikkhu, Connected discourses of the Buddha, wisdom publications

Using the sensory inputs we get from the sense bases we create our own worlds. So, my world is essentially different to your world; the values, right and wrong etc. are different. An enemy in my world can be a friend in your world; a tree that is valuable in my world would be worthless in yours. Person and the world are relative entities. Just as a person exist in relation to the world, in the same manner a world exists in relation to a person. This scenario enables us to speak of the 'arising and cessation of the world'.

In the preface of Notes[1] (p.8) it says "The Buddha, too, insists that questions about self and the world are unanswerable, either by refusing to answer them or by indicating that no statement about self and the world can be justified," but the reason Buddha gives for his silence is not because they are unanswerable, but because they are of no use (see Prologue). Certainly, questions regarding 'self' can be answered. (The reason why Buddha kept silent in **Avyākata samy.** 10 is given later in the same sutta). On page 9[1] it says: "The world, we must understand, is determined as such only with reference to self; for it is essentially 'what belongs to self'" to which we cannot agree with. Things in the world become 'my world' simply because they are out there and because that I have come to know of them. I don't consider some dog pooh lying on the roadside as 'what belongs to myself'.

Now let's consider why the Buddha never went on to define or explain the external world? Why is there no Genesis[2] in the Buddha's teaching? Why did he keep silent regarding the questions about

[1] **Ñaṇavīra Thera,** Clearing the Path: Writings of **Ñaṇavīra Thera** (1960 – 1965), path press, 2003

[2] Meaning the first beginning. DN **Aggañña sutta** is a later addition.

external world? Because the teaching of the Buddha is only concerned about how to get rid of suffering and it doesn't intend to teach anything beyond that (refer Prologue). Questions regarding the world are not concerned with this primary task and are external to it. In other words, they are useless questions as it was explained to **Mālunkyaputta:**

> "Why have I left that undeclared? Because it is unbeneficial, it does not belong to the fundamentals of the holy life, it does not lead to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nibbāna. That is why I have left it undeclared." (**Cūḷamālunkya sutta, MN 63**)[1]

Now we have come up with two very important rules regarding Dhamma that we should always keep in mind.

1. The Dhamma is wholly concerned about the way leading to the release from suffering and to do that, with suffering as well.
2. The Dhamma is wholly concerned with the subjectivity (about oneself) and not at all about the external world.

This does not mean that he rejected the existence of an external world, no! He accepted its existence as a fact. There are **cakkuviññesu viññātabbā dhammā, sotaviññesu viññātabbā dhammā** etc. (Things that should be known by eye conscious, things that should be known by ear conscious etc…). **Ven Sāriputta** in MN28 explains 'There is earth element internal and external…' (so forth with the other three elements). Buddha has also taught about

[1] **Ñanamoli**, **Bhikkhu, et.al.** Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha, wisdom publications

virtue, social obligations and duties one should perform to others. He also commended worldly development for lay people without infringing his virtue. What meant above by 'not concerned about the external world' is the analysis and other philosophical explanations about the physical world as it has come down in later **Abhidhamma** and other exegesis.

RŪPA

Rūpa is usually translated as matter (as **ÑV** has done throughout Notes), but this is not correct. This word takes three slightly different meanings depending on the context.

1. One meaning is just 'matter', which in the sense it is used in **rūpa** and **arūpa** plains of existence (usually used as **rūpaloka** and **arūpaloka** though the words are non-canonical). At the time of the Buddha it was generally held that the matter is made of by four great elements. i.e., **paṭavi** (earth), **āpo** (water), **tejo** (fire), **vāyo** (air), which Buddha also accepted in the sense they were used.
2. Second meaning it takes is 'form' (or sights) when **rūpa** is used as the object of the eye (i.e. the external sphere corresponding to **cakkāyatana**). In this case it is always used in the plural form **rūpā**. (e.g. **cakkuñca paṭicca rūpe ca uppajjati cakkuviññāṇaṃ**)

3. The third and the most important meaning **rūpa** takes is when it is used as an aggregate in **pañcupādanakkandā** (**rūpūpādānak-khandho**) and also when it is used in **nāma-rūpa**. In these two occasions it is always used in its singular form '**rūpaṃ**'.

What is the meaning of '**rūpaṃ**' when it is used in these two occasions (in the third meaning)? Why is it used in the singular form only? In these cases **rūpaṃ** is explained as (in both **Khanda Samy.**-which deals with **pañcupādānakkhandā** and **Abhisamaya Samy.**-which deals with **paṭiccasamuppāda**): 'four great elements and by grasping of four great elements'. What is this thing (i.e. **rūpaṃ**) that is made of four great elements that were grasped? It's the ultimate 'matter' where grasping is done in full force: this body. Ven. Sariputta explains it well in MN28.

"What, friends, is the earth element? The earth element may be either internal or external. What is the internal earth element? Whatever internally, belonging to oneself, is solid, solidified, and clung-to; that is, head-hairs, body-hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, bone-marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, diaphragm, spleen, lungs, intestines, mesentery, contents of the stomach, faeces, or whatever else internally, belonging to oneself, is solid, solidified, and clung-to: this is called the internal earth element." (Mahāhatthipadopama sutta, MN28)[1]

Explanation continues to describe the other three elements in a similar fashion, where internal element is exemplified by internal organs and other constituents of the body. And then ven. Sariputta goes on to explicitly define **rūpaṃ** as:

[1] **Ñanamoli op. cit.**

> "Friends, just as when a space is enclosed by timber and creepers, grass, and clay, it comes to be termed just 'house,' so too, when a space is enclosed by bones and sinews, flesh and skin, it comes to be termed ' **rūpaṃ**.' "[1]

More sutta quotations can be provided to prove this meaning of **rūpaṃ**. In **khajjanīya sutta** (SN III, 1.2.3.7, 148) **rūpaṃ** is explained as:

> "And why, bhikkhus, do you call it **rūpaṃ**? 'It is afflicted,' bhikkhus, therefore it is called **rūpaṃ**. Afflicted by what? Afflicted by cold, afflicted by heat, afflicted by hunger, afflicted by thirst, afflicted by contact with flies, mosquitoes, wind, sun, and serpents. 'It is afflicted,' bhikkhus, therefore it is called form. "

Surely, it's not rocks and trees that feel hunger or thirst or will get afflicted by mosquito bites. With the foregoing explanation it will be clear to the reader that to translate **nāmarūpa** as name-material[2] is a big mistake, instead it should be translated as name-body (in fact **rūpaṃ** can be translated as 'The Material'. The most important material thing for any being and also a primary cause for suffering. Thus, it also becomes the most important (or the only important) 'material' concerned with our quest to end suffering). This interpretation also confirms with the first rule mentioned in the WORLD. **Dhamma** is all concerned about the subject, not the external world or its material. If someone still has doubts about this translation, he can be referred to **Mahānidāna sutta** in DN 9:

---

[1] **Ñanamoli op. cit.** (Pali word has been used instead of 'material form').
[2] **Ñv** says: **rūpa** is certainly 'material' (**Ñāṇavīra**, op. cit., p.28)

'With consciousness as condition, **nāmarūpa**', so it was said: how it is, Ānanda, that with consciousness as condition there is **nāmarūpa** should be seen in this manner. If, Ānanda, consciousness were not to descend into the mother's womb, would **nāmarūpa** be consolidated in the mother's womb?

– No indeed, lord.

– If, Ānanda, having descended into the mother's womb, consciousness were to turn aside, would **nāmarūpa** be delivered into this situation?

– No indeed, lord.

– If, Ānanda, consciousness were cut off from one still young, from a boy or a girl, would **nāmarūpa** come to increase, growth, and fullness?

– No indeed, lord.

– Therefore, Ānanda, just this is the reason, this is the occasion, this is the arising, this is the condition of **nāmarūpa**, that is to say consciousness.

'With **nāmarūpa** as condition, consciousness', so it was said: how it is, Ānanda, that with **nāmarūpa** as condition there is consciousness should be seen in this manner. If, Ānanda, consciousness were not to obtain a stay in **nāmarūpa**, would future arising and coming-into-being of birth, aging, death, and unpleasure (suffering), be manifest?

– No indeed, lord.

– Therefore, Ānanda, just this is the reason, this is the occasion, this is the arising, this is the condition of consciousness, that is to say **nāmarūpa.**[1]

[1] Ibid. p.139 ('name-&-matter' being replaced by '**nāmarūpa**')

In **Nidāna/ Abhisamaya Samy ii,9** it says "**iti ayaṃ ceva kāyo bahiddhā ca nāmarūpaṃ itthetaṃ dvayaṃ**" here it is spoken of an external **nāmarūpa,** so one might raise an objection to the above definition given for **rūpaṃ.** But it should be mentioned that all in **sutta piṭaka** this is the only place where an external **nāmarūpa** is spoken of. So naturally one might doubt whether a corruption has occurred in the text. But we need not to delve on this point because there is a plausible explanation. To understand what is said here we should not take this sentence isolated from the rest of the sutta. The sutta continues: "**dvayaṃ paticca** phasso. **Saḷevāyatanāni, yehi puṭṭo bālo/ paṇḍito sukhadukkhaṃ paṭisaṃvediyati etesaṃ vā aññatarena**"

> "Bhikkhus, for the fool/wise man, hindered by ignorance and fettered by craving, this body has thereby originated. So, there is this body and external **nāmarūpa**: thus this dyad. Dependent on the dyad there is contact. There are just six sense bases, contacted through which—or through a certain one among them—the fool / wise man experiences pleasure and pain."[1]

Here what is spoken about is the contact between the six sense bases and the external bases (i.e. forms, sounds, smells, tastes, touches, mind objects). So here external **nāmarūpa** means the external world. In other words here **nāmarūpa** has taken a special meaning of 'world'. (Since **nāma** includes feeling and perception it would be absurd to think that rocks and trees have feelings and perceptions, which in turn indicate a consciousness). This usage of **nāmarūpa** can be seen in Samiddhi sutta (AN 9.1.2.4) as well. Ven. Sariputta asks Samiddhi; "**kimārammaṇā purisassa saṅkappavitakkā uppajjanti?**

[1] Bodhi, op. cit.

The answer is; '**nāmarūpārammaṇā bhante**" ("taking what as object does man's thoughts and concepts arise? Taking **nāmarūpa** as object sir'"). Two lines down it is said that these thoughts and concepts arise from contact. Since a person thinks regarding what has arisen in the senses (i.e. the world) we can see that **nāmarūpa** is used above as a synonym to the world.

ANICCATĀ

A person or an individual or being is comprised of five things and of five things only, nothing more or less (excluding the beings in the **arūpa** realm). They are the body (**rūpaṃ**) feeling (**vedanā**), perception (**saññā**), **saṅkhārā** (we'll leave the word as it is for the moment), consciousness (**viññāṇa**). These are called the five (grasping) aggregates in Buddha's teaching and we make the 'self' (or soul) out of these five, either by using one or more of these (vide **sakkāyadiṭṭhi** (personality view) in **cūḷavedalla sutta**, MN 44). Since according to the teaching of the Buddha, the release from suffering has to be reached by eliminating **attavāda-upādāna** (i.e., holding to the belief in a self. Other three **upādānas** will be eliminated with this) one should come to know that these five aggregates cannot be considered as 'self' or what 'belongs to a self' (**attaṃ vā attaniyaṃ vā**). The most effective way to realize this fact is to see the impermanence in them, i.e. they arise, they disappear and changes while persisting. If they are impermanent the self (or soul) also has to be impermanent. Then it cannot be a self (for the self or soul has to be permanent). **Ñv** translates **ṭhitassa aññatatthaṃ paññāyati** as

'change while standing is manifest'[1]. Although it can be translated so in a sense, what he meant by that is not correct. He interpreted it as 'invariance under transformation'. '**Ṭhitassa**' is in **chaṭṭi**, so the change is 'for' or 'of' what is standing. In other words, the 'thing' that is standing is changing. This is something everyone can see and know.

We know how our body got changed, from the childhood to youth, and then to a man and that man to an old man. We feel how pleasant and unpleasant feelings arise, change with time (the intensity) and then fade away. What we should do is not to conceptualize whether these occur as flux or in discrete manner, but to observe them as they occur and come to understand their impermanent nature, which will lead us to knowledge, to see that there is no 'self' to be found in them. Which will in turn give rise to **vijjā** and the 'self-view' will be removed.

> "And how, bhikkhus, is the perception of impermanence developed and cultivated so that it eliminates all sensual lust, eliminates all lust for existence, eliminates all ignorance, and uproots all conceit 'I am'? 'Such is **rūpaṃ**, such its origin, such its passing away; such is feeling … such is perception … such are **saṅkhārā**… such is consciousness, such its origin, such its passing away': that is how the perception of impermanence is developed and cultivated..." [2]
>
> (**Aniccasañña sutta**, SN III 1.2.5.10, 266)

If it is to be said that "to tell us that impermanence is flux we only need a Heraclitus not a Buddha", then to tell us that change is discontinues or 'there is invariance under transformation', we only

[1] **Ñanavīra** op.cit. p.55

[2] Bodhi. op.cit

need a bradley[1] not a Buddha. This is not to defend the 'flux theory' which indeed is unacceptable (**Ñv's** arguments against it are indeed valid), but to point out that these things are digression from the main (or only) subject and irrelevant to the problem of **dukkha**. All these wrong notions about impermanence have occurred by forgetting the rule no.2 in WORLD. Impermanence as described by Buddha is not concerned with rocks or trees or chairs or tables or concrete slabs, but with what we take as our personality. He never went on to explain impermanence that happens around us (as indicated by the above sutta quotation). This was (and is) a subject for the philosophers from Heraclitus to those of today to deal with. Seeing (not wandering) the impermanence in external objects is also helpful to give up craving for those, but this falls under '**sabbaloke anabhiratasaññā'** (perception of disenchanting with the whole world)[2]. Other than that, how the things in the world change, whether it is flux or discontinuous change, does not matter for us. They are nothing but **lokacintā** that one will never come to know of. For more than two thousand years philosophers have been arguing on these things without a conclusion. Instead of thinking 'how' these changes occur Buddha advised us to observe them. (Interestingly **Ñv** try to explain movement by 'a succession of contiguous fixed finite trajectories'[3]. This is exactly how movement is explained in **Abhidhamma** and in its commentaries, where they take '**rūpakalāpa**' to explain it. When something moves forward 'a succession of contiguous' **rūpakalāpa** arise and disappear in the forward direction giving the illusion of continuous movement. **Ñv's**

[1] **Ñanavīra** op.cit. p.357

[2] **Girimānanda sutta** (AN 10.2.1.10)

[3] **Ñanavīra** op.cit. p.83

moving picture example[1] also can be used here to explain how this happens. By trying to explain things in the external world (ironically forgetting the subjectivity which he so iteratively mentions) he has accepted a doctrine that he so much wanted to reject).

SAṄKHĀRA

Ñv translates **saṅkhāra** as determinations. Let's see how adequate this meaning is. In his endeavour to find a meaning to **saṅkhāra** he comes to the conclusion "**saṅkhāra a** thing from which some other thing is inseparable—in other words, a necessary condition… **saṅkhāra** is something upon which something else depends" (p.22). In other words, he has equated **saṅkhāra** to **hetu** (reason) or **paccaya** (cause). But we don't find anywhere in suttas **saṅkhāra** being used in this sense, not even in **cūḷavedalla sutta** which **Ñv** use to derive this meaning. There **saṅkhāra** is used in a more active sense. Breathing is not the cause of the body, but food is ('with the arising of food body arises, with the cessation of food body ceases' -**samudaya sutta**, **SN V,** 3.8.2, 330). There are four types of food (food consumed, contact (**phassa**), thinking (**manosañcetanā), Viññāṇa**) and in-out breathing is nowhere to be found here. In the same Sutta it is mentioned that the cause of **citta** is **nāma-rūpa** not feeling and perception. These things (in-out breathing etc…) are not determinations (or causes) of **kāya, vacī** and **citta**, but they make up these **kāya, vacī** and **citta,** or they form them. The translation

[1] Ibid. p.181

proposed by **Kñ** is 'preparation' (which is better than 'determination') for they prepare **kāya-vacī-citta**. So, we can translate **saṅkhāra** as 'making up' or 'formation' or 'preparation'. **Kāya-vacī-citta saṅkhārā** are the most fundamental of **saṅkhārā**. On p.23 **Ñv** says "everything (dhamma) must, of necessity, be (or be somehow included within) one or more of the **pañc(upādān)akkhandhā**. In the same way, every determination (**saṅkhāra**) must also be one or more of the **pañc(upādan)akkhandhā**. Thus the **pañc(upādān)akkhandhā** can be regarded either as **saṅkhārā** or as **dhammā**." Here **saṅkhārā** has been equated to **dhammā**. Since **saṅkhārā** determine **dhammā** (according to his interpretation) we were driven to the absurd conclusion that **pañc(upādān)akkhandhā** determine **pañc(upādān)akkhandhā**. In other words, 'it itself is the cause of itself'. On p.24 he refers to '**khandha Samy**. VI, 4' and says explicitly "in this context, the **saṅkhārā** are **cetanā**", what it is done here is **cetanā** has been equalled to **sañcetanā**. Although **cetanā** can be included in **sañcetanā** other way round is not possible, for **sañcetanā** has a broader meaning and can be equated to 'thoughts'. The equation of **cetanā** to **sañcetanā** leads back to the same problem raised above, since it is said "if this is so, **cetanā** must be something that other things depend on… they are the **pañc(upādān)akkhandhā** themselves". So, again **pañc(upādān)akkhandhā** depend on **pañc(upādān)akkhandhā**. The footnote 'u' again leads to the problems raised earlier. There it is explicitly said that if A depends on B, then B is **saṅkhāra**. And it is also mentioned "the reciprocal dependence of **viññāṇa** and **nāma-rūpa**", so this imply **nāmarūpa** is **saṅkhāra** of **viññāṇa** and **viññāṇa** is **saṅkhāra** of **nāmarūpa**. And all the items in **paṭiccasamuppāda** also become **saṅkhāra**. Which is more explicitly said on p.28 "We see that each item in the series of §17 is preceded by a **saṅkhāra** upon which it depends, and that

therefore the total collection of items in the series depends upon the total collection of their respective **saṅkhārā**. In this sense we might say that the total collection of items is **saṅkhārāpaccaya**''. Then we have: **saṅkhāra** of **saṅkhāra** (e.g. **jāti**) is **saṅkhāra** (e.g. bhava). Then the second item in the series (i.e. **saṅkhārā** in '**aviḭjjāpaccayā saṅkhārā**') has no specific meaning or value. But as it was stated above **saṅkhārā** CANNOT be equated to **hetu** or **paccaya** (in DN 15 it is said '**eseva hetu etaṃ nidānaṃ esa samudayo esa paccayo**', but we don't see a '**esa saṅkhāro**' being added to this line) and it is NOT what other things depend on. Taking the meaning of **saṅkhāra** as such will inevitably lead us to all these absurd conclusions.

On p.26 **Ñv** say "Even though the Khajjaniya sutta (§14) tells us that determinations are so called since 'they determine the determined' (which includes consciousness), we must not conclude that the determinations in 'determinations are a condition for consciousness' (**saṅkhārapaccayā viññāṇaṃ**) are determinations because they are a condition for consciousness: on the contrary, they are a condition for consciousness because they are determinations". I don't see why we should think in contrary to the **Sutta** when it specifically tells us something. He, in union with the commentary take **puññābhisaṅkhārā** etc. as the **saṅkhāra** that comes in '**saṅkhārāpaccayā viññāṇaṃ**', and had to state "as determinations they are a condition for consciousness and as **puthujjana's** determinations they are a condition for **puthujjana's** consciousness (which is always **puññūpaga, apuññūpaga** or **āneñjūpaga**)", and again or p.30 it says "all experience in intentional: it is inseparable (except for the **arahat**) from **puññābhisaṅkhāra,**

apuññābhisaṅkhāra and **āneñjābhisaṅkhāra**"[1]. But a little reflection will tell us that this is not so. When I look at a tree or watch the leaves sway in the wind or when I move my arm, I'm not accumulating any **puñña** or **apuñña** (**āneñja** is not neutral kamma). These erroneous ideas have come to be because of wrong understanding of '**cetanāhaṃ bhikkhave, kammaṃ vadāmi, cetayitvā kammaṃ karoti kāyena vācāya manasā'.** kamma means action, and action is not always **puñña, apuñña** and **āneñja**. There are neutral action and corresponding neutral **cetanā.** Only **puñña, apuñña** and **āneñja** actions lead to **vipāka**, so only those were mentioned above. But it is also not mentioned that they constitute all the actions.

Something about **cetanā** should also be said here. On p.25 it says "we know what a thing is when we know what it is for", this is not completely correct. Rather we identify objects by their shape, sound, smell, taste and touch. For example, if we see a chair made of paper, we know that we can't sit on it, still we call it a chair. why? Because it has the shape of a chair. He continues "thus these potentialities can also be understood as the significance or purpose of the object, and therefore as its intentions" and on p. 25: "one of these intentions, though of a special kind, is that the object is for me - It's mine, *etam mama*". I do not know whether in philosophy there is such a definition for the English word 'intention', but surely in the **suttas** intention is used in the sense of 'will', or to use a **Ñv's** definition 'intentional intention' (p.60) (but this definition contradicts with what he says on page 25 (footnote 'v') where just intention is

[1] May be based on this **Ñd** once said to me that every action is **puñña** or **apuñña**. Although there are differences, **Ñd's** thinking is very much influenced by **Ñv**.

used for **cetanā**). Otherwise **cetanā** cannot be considered as **kamma**. We also don't find that there arises an intention 'that is for me' or 'that is mine' whenever we see an object. For example, when we see a dead rat, no intention arises to acquire it! From the point of **Dhamma** we cannot agree with Husserl's "all consciousness is 'intentional'" (p.62) (intention to mean **cetanā**) as sometimes **Ñv** also use. On p.65 it is said "naturally, where there is attention there is intentional intention (i.e. **cetanā**), and there is no consciousness without at least incipient attention". But in our experience we don't see such a thing is there. When mindfulness becomes a habit we can watch things with vacant mind with attention, there is no **cetanā** there. Mindfulness is pleasant just because of this reason. The above statement goes against the Buddha's teaching as well. In **Mahāvedalla Sutta ven. Sariputta** says that feeling and perception are inseparable from consciousness, but **cetanā** is not included here. So, consciousness can exist without **cetanā**. Attention can be paid intentionally (i.e. by **cetanā**), (which is what happens most of the time), but it is not a necessary factor. An acute pain will grab our attention, in such cases it happens without our intention to pay attention to it (in fact our intention would be not to pay attention to it).

Earlier it was mentioned that the words 'making ups, preparations, formations, constructions' convey the meaning of **saṅkhārā** better than determinations. Let's check the suitability of these words. A thing that is constructed, made up, fabricated is called a **saṅkhata. saṅkhata** has three characteristics ('arising is manifest, disappearance is manifest, and change in what is standing is manifest': AN III, v, 7). And these characteristics are applied to **pañcakkhandhā** (**paṭamaĀnanda sutta**, SN III 1.1.4.5, 66). So, **pañcakkhandā** are **saṅkhata**. In **khajjanīya sutta** (SN III 1.2.3.7,

148) it is said that **saṅkhārā** are called **saṅkhārā** because they '**saṅkhataṃ abhisañkharoti**': (extra- construct what is (already) constructed), and they do this to the **pañcakkhandhā** (i.e., they extra-construct the (already) constructed feeling in to form of feeling, etc.). And the result is the **pañcupadānakkhandhā**, which is now been reconstructed to contain **avijjā**. Simile of an artist is given in (SN III, 1.2.5.8, 258): 'just like an artist paint an image of a man or a woman on a wall, an unlearnt commoner creates **rūpaṃ**, **vedanā**, etc…'. This painter is none other than the six **cetanākāyā** (**rūpasañcetanā, saddasañcetanā**, etc…) (**upādānaparivatta sutta** SN III 1.2.1.4,102). So, because of **avijjā** these **sañcetanā** (thoughts or mental constructions or mental formations) take the five aggregates as the raw material and turn them into five holding aggregates where a 'self' is evident. Similar to the English words 'construction, preparation, formation' **saṅkhāra** can be used to call the process as well as result of the process. So, **pañcupādanakkhandhā** are also called **saṅkhārā**. (Vide **yamaka sutta** SN III.1.2.4.3, 188: **anicca** and **dukkha** are common to both, MN35 **cūḷasaccaka sutta: pañcupādānkkhandhā aniccā, pañcupādanakkhandhā anattā, sabbe saṅkhārā aniccā, sabbe dhammā anattā**). Since five holding aggregates are taken as me and mine; since the 'self' is created by using one or few of these, we expect them to be permanent and stable. But alas! Being **saṅkhata** they change, and when they change it gives us suffering. We don't want our body to get old, but we can't stop it from being so. We don't want pleasant feelings to fade away, but they are ephemeral and fade away. So:

Sabbe saṅkhārā aniccā
Sabbe saṅkhārā dukkhā

The verse: **Aniccā vata saṅkhārā - uppādavayadhammino**
uppajjitva nirujjhanti - tesaṃ vūpasamo sukho

("Impermanent indeed are **saṅkhārā**
Their nature is to arise and vanish.
Having arisen, they cease:
Their appeasement is blissful.")
(**parinibbāna sutta,** SN I 6.2.5, 282)

definitely point out that '**saṅkhārā**' is not a word hanging in mid-air, but has a specific meaning (at least in this context). From this verse it is evident that the conclusion we arrived at above (that **pañcupa-dānakkhandhā** are **saṅkhārā**) is indeed correct.

Now let's look at **saṅkhārā** that comes in **paṭiccasamuppāda**. Here **kāya-vacī-citta saṅkhārā** are what that construct, makeup or prepare **kāyaṃ, vācaṃ** and **cittaṃ**. Without them **kāyaṃ, vācaṃ** and **cittaṃ** cannot exist. Once they come into existence, because of **kāyaṃ kāyasañcetana** come into be, because of **vācaṃ vacīsañcetanā** come into be, because of **cittaṃ manosañcetanā** come into be. These (**kāyasañcetana, vacīsañcetanā, manosañcetanā**) are also called **kāyasaṅkhārā, vacīsaṅkhārā** and **manosaṅkhārā**. I.e., mental constructions regarding body, speech and mind. Body, speech and mental action arise from them, so they cause **kamma** to arise which in turn causes **vipāka**.

'**kāye vāhānanda sati kāyasañcetanā hetu uppajjati ajjhattaṃ sukhadukkhaṃ… avijjāpaccayā ca**'

"Ānanda, when there is the body, because of bodily volition pleasure and pain arise internally; when there is speech, because

of verbal volition pleasure and pain arise internally; when there is the mind, because of mental volition pleasure and pain arise internally—and with ignorance as condition."

(**Bhūmija sutta**, SNII 1.3.5, 58)

These are done because of **avijjā (‘imesu dhammesu avijjā anupatitā’ -Bhūmija sutta).** Since **puññābhisankhāra, apuññābhisaṅkhāra** and **āneñjābhisaṅkhāra** also causes **kamma** to arise we can roughly equate these two groups.

Āyusaṅkhārā is that which prepare or makeup the life. As long as there is **Āyusaṅkhārā** life will go on[1]. So now we have accounted all occurrences of **saṅkhāra**.

DHAMMA

In **pāli** language a word that is used to identify a universal (a class of items) is sometimes used to identify a particular of that universal. This we saw in **RŪPA** and **SAṄKHĀRA** and it is true to the word **dhamma** as well. Just as **Ñv** points out the simple meaning of **dhamma** is ‘a thing’, and it is sometimes used to identify a more specific thing. For example the ‘teaching of the Buddha’ is also called **Dhamma**. When the term ‘**sabbe dhammā**’ is used it is used with the meaning ‘everything’. This can be seen in **Mūlaka sutta** (AN 10.2.1.8):

[1] . On P.27 **Āyusaṅkhārā** is defined as ‘what life depends on’. If this is correct food too will be **Āyusaṅkhārā**.

"Friend, everything (**sabbe dhammā**) is rooted in desire,
everything is born from attention, everything arises from contact"

About the use of '**sabbe dhammā**' in the triad:

Sabbe saṅkhārā aniccā
Sabbe saṅkhārā dukkhā
Sabbe dhamma anattā

the commentary says that the word '**dhamma**' is introduced in to the third line (instead of **saṅkhārā**) to include **nibbāna**. The argument is that **saṅkhārā** are impermanent and suffering and **nibbāna** is not (which is a fallacious thing to say since such notions cannot be used for total extinction), so **nibbāna** is not included in **saṅkhārā**. But because **nibbāna** is also 'not self', we have to use '**dhamma**' here since it includes **nibbāna** as well. But according to the above **Sutta** quotation it is obvious that this argument does not hold. For then we have to say '**nibbāna** is rooted in desire, it's born of attention and arises from contact', which is not so. **Nibbāna** is in fact the cessation of these very things (desire and etc…). **Ñv** takes **dhamma** here to mean "whatever thing he identifies as 'self'" (p.23). But this is not the case either, since '**sabbe dhammā**' stands for (as mentioned earlier) 'everything that arise from contact'. It's the **pañcupādānkkhandhā** that we consider as 'my self' (or something derived from them). I certainly don't consider the tree outside my window (which has arisen from contact, therefore **dhamma**) as myself. To say that **pañcupādānkkhandhā** are **sabbe dhammā** (as in p.23 §13) is a forced interpretation that has no support from the **suttas**, nor from the commentary. Again on p.24 (footnote 'u') it is said "but also it is with them that **attā** is identified, and they are thus **dhammā**": this indeed is a strange definition for **dhamma** and such a definition is nowhere to be found in the **suttas**. On p.67 it is said "But this notion

(i.e. self) is entertained only if it is pleasurable, and it is only pleasurable provided the mastery is assumed to be permanent; for a mastery—which is essentially a kind of absolute timelessness, an unmoved moving of things—that is undermined by impermanence is no mastery at all, but a mockery. Thus the regarding of a thing, a dhamma, as attā or 'self' can survive for only so long as the notion gives pleasure". But we don't experience such a thing, nor can we deduce such a thing from the **suttas**. For example if I consider my consciousness as self I don't get pleasure out of that. If such a pleasure is derived, **putajjana** should always be in a constant state of ecstasy (and to lose that **putajjana** state would be a foolish thing). Pleasure is divided in to two main groups **sāmisa sukha** (sensual pleasure) and **nirāmisa sukha** (pleasure derived by giving up sensual pleasures, **paviveka sukha, jhāna sukha** etc.). There is no '**self sukha**'.

On p.68 it is said "but when it is seen to be dependent upon other **dhamma** not considered to be permanent, its impermanence does than become manifests", but how do you know that this 'other **dhammā**' are impermanent and suffering? If the other **dhammā** are permanent and pleasurable then this **dhamma** also should be permanent and pleasurable. So then in order to see those 'other **dhammā**' impermanent and suffering, we have to see those 'other other **dhammā**' that this 'other **dhammā**' depends on as impermanent and suffering, and this will go on and on infinitely leaving us in a precarious situation. This shows that these words cannot be variables hanging in mid-air without any specific meaning. If we go according to the definitions in **suttas** these problems do not arise. **Dukkha** arise because of **taṅhā** (craving) and **upādāna** (holding) (see the second truth in the four noble truths). If we have **taṅhā** for something we have **upādāna** for it and when we lose them,

or when they vanish or cease we suffer. So, for **saṅkhārā** to be suffering, it should be something that we have **taṅhā** and **upādāna**. Since it is **pañcupādānkkhandhā** that we take as 'self' it is towards them that we primarily have **taṅhā** and **upādāna** and thus, the source of **dukkha**. In **SAṄKHĀRA** we saw that they in fact can be called **saṅkhārā**. (The verse '**aniccā vata saṅkhārā… - saṅkhārā** are indeed impermanent…' assert in such a positive manner that **saṅkhārā** are impermanent and **dukkha** indicates that **saṅkhārā** is not a term with a loose meaning). Now we can conclude that in this triad **saṅkhārā** is used to mean **pañcupādānkkhandhā** and that they are impermanent and suffering (in the first noble truth there is the conclusion: **saṅkhittena pañcupādānakkhandhā dukkhā**- in summary the five holding aggregates are suffering). In the third line **dhammā** is used (instead of **saṅkhārā**) with **anattā** (not self) to indicate that a self is not to be found in **pañcupādānakkhandhā** as well as anything else that can be cognized of, for **dhammā** consists everything that we can know of (arising from contact). In other words, it simply means that 'the whole world is empty of a self'. So, what we have here are three definite statements, not an indirect method as suggested by **Ñv** (as on pages 23, 68 Footnote 'u', 102).

AKĀLIKA

Since **Ñv** bases his interpretation on **paṭiccasamuppāda** on the fact that **dhamma** is **akālika** we first have to look at its meaning prior to a proper discussion of **paṭiccasamuppāda**. The commentarial interpretation is 'immediate' (not taking time). **Ñv** also has accepted this meaning. The meaning of **akālika** can be

derived from **Samiddhi sutta** (SN I 1.2.10, 18). There a certain **devatā** advice ven. Samiddhi '**mā sandiṭṭhikaṃ hitvā kālikaṃ anudhāvi**' '(don't go after [something you will get after] a [long] time abandoning what you can get in this life). Ven. **Samiddhi** replies that he does not do so, instead '**kālikañca khvāhaṃ hitvā sandiṭṭhikaṃ anudhāvāmi. Kālikāhi kāmā vuttā bhagavatā… ayaṃ dhammo akāliko**'' (abandoning what is pertaining to time, I'm going after what can be get in this life. It's the sensuals that Buddha has said to be pertaining to time… this **Dhamma** is **akālika**). Although the use of the word **akālika** by **devatā** gives a sense of 'immediate', **ven. Samiddhi** uses it as 'non-related to time' or 'not pertaining to time'. It does not mean that time is not involved, but in the sense that it is timeless. See how **kālika** has been applied to **kāmā**. A sensual gratification can be enjoyed only while the experience last. As soon as the experience is gone, the enjoyment is gone as well (Imagine the experience of enjoying a delicious chocolate bar. If **akālika** means instant or immediate then indeed it is **kāmā** that is **akālika** not Dhamma. But ven. Samiddhi specifically says that **kāmā** is **kālika** and Dhamma is **akālika.**). It has a temporary value. On the other hand, **Dhamma** is **akālika**, it is the lasting release from suffering, not a temporary release. And again, the validity of **Dhamma** is not pertaining to a certain time period. As it was true during the Buddha's time so it is true today and so it will be in the future. It is non-temporal in this sense.

> '**katamo ca bhikkhave, paticcasamuppādo? Jatipaccayā bhikkhave. jarāmaraṇaṃ. Uppādā vā tathāgatānaṃ anuppādā vā tathāgatānaṃ ṭhitāva sā dhātu dhammaṭṭhitatā dhammaniyāmatā idapaccayatā**'
>
> "And what, bhikkhus, is dependent origination? 'With birth as condition, aging-and-death [comes to be]': whether there is an

arising of Tathāgatas or no arising of Tathāgatas, that element still persists, the stableness of the Dhamma, the fixed course of the Dhamma, specific conditionality."

(**paccaya sutta,** SN II 1.2.10, 40)

On p.19 **Ñv** says "**dhamma** is **sandiṭṭhika** and **akālika**, that it is immediately visible and without involving time" but **sandiṭṭhika** means 'one can see (**Dhamma**) by himself (in this very life), he doesn't have to pass away to get the result (as in the case of the promised heaven). Since 'he gets the results in this life' and 'knows for himself' he doesn't have to rely on a teacher or a divine messenger or a prophet or anyone else. And **akālika** (as shown above) does not mean 'without involving time' (p.19) (i.e. immediate) or 'all be seen at once' (p.19) but proclaims the timeless truthfulness of **Dhamma**, its non-temporary and independent-of-time nature.

PAṬICCASAMUPPĀDA

Ñv's strong philosophical background although helpful to him in certain ways, sometimes drags him to extremes. Even though there is no need to oversimplify the **Dhamma** there is also any need to make it over difficult to understand (because its already difficult enough). His approach seems to say that only a person who is in line with existential philosophy will understand Buddha's teaching (even he had, in a couple of places, denied this, there are some other places that he has indicated so). In preface (p.5) he says: "Only in a vertical view, straight down into the abyss of his own personal existence, is a man capable of apprehending the perilous insecurity of his situation; and only a man who does apprehend this is prepared to listen to the Buddha's Teaching". He is more explicit on p.321: "sooner or later he condemns himself as unjustified, and then despair begins. It is only at the point that the Buddha's teaching begins to be intelligible." There is no essential necessity for someone to see the unjustifiability of his existence or to see the contradiction in which his self cannot be located or the ambiguity of existence to understand the teaching. What is needed is to understand the inherent suffering in being (i.e. (re)birth, sickness, old age, death, sorrow, pain etc… as described in the **Dhammacakkappavattana sutta** (SN V-2, .12.2.1, 270) as the first noble truth). Buddha himself says that these were the reasons that made him leave his house in search of a **nibbāna**.

> "Bhikkhus, before my enlightenment, while I was still only an unenlightened Bodhisatta, I too, being myself subject to birth, sought what was also subject to birth; being myself subject to ageing, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement, I sought what

was also subject to ageing, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement. Then I considered thus: 'Why, being myself subject to birth, do I seek what is also subject to birth? Why, being myself subject to ageing, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement, do I seek what is also subject to ageing, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement? Suppose that, being myself subject to birth, having understood the danger in what is subject to birth, I seek the unborn supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna. Suppose that, being myself subject to ageing, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement, having understood the danger in what is subject to ageing, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement, I seek the unageing, unailing, deathless, sorrowless, and undefiled supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna."

(**Ariyapariyesan sutta,** MN 26)

These things are indeed temporal and horizontal (and these in turn show the meaninglessness and purposelessness of life, which is **nibbidā**) and **nibbidā** can be developed by contemplating these obvious **dukkha**.

Paṭiccasamuppāda was taught by the Buddha to explain how this **dukkha** arise. The basic formula of **paṭiccasamuppāda is**:

Imasmiṃ sati idaṃ hoti, imassuppādā idaṃ uppajjati;
imasmiṃ asati idaṃ na hoti, imassa nirodhā idaṃ nirujjhati.

Which **Ñv** translates as:

When there is this this is, with arising of this this arises
When there is not this this is not, with cessation of this this ceases.

The fundamental error with this translation is that the very dependency (**paṭicca**) in dependent origination is lost. In 'with

arising of this, this arises' two independent phenomena are stated without any apparent connection. It's same as saying '(in the morning) with the chirping of birds lotuses bloom', where the chirping of birds and the blossoming of lotuses has no interconnection what so ever. So, the very essence of **paṭiccasamuppāda** is lost in the above translation. PTS dictionary provides a better translation for the 2nd and 4th lines.

1. From the arising of this that (or this) arises
4. From the cessation of this that (or this) ceases.

Words '**uppādā**' and '**nirodhā**' are used to convey this dependence. The reason for **Ñv's** translation is obvious; for he wanted the two arisings to happen simultaneously so that **paṭiccasamuppāda** will be instantaneous. But then the very **paṭicca** is lost. Not only that, if we are to say 'with the arising of A, B arises' we can also say 'with the arising of B, A arises', which should also be correct. So, we are eligible to say 'with the arising of contact feeling arises' and 'with the arising of feeling contact arises'. We then can reverse the **paṭiccasamuppāda**, both the **samudaya** (arising) and **nirodha** (ceasing) aspects. If all the twelve factors arise at the same time (i.e., non-temporally or instantly) then either they all depend not on their preceding factor, but on one factor: **avijjā** or more correctly they don't depend on anything. Then we are entitled to say, instead of '**saḷāyatanapaccayā phasso, phassapaccayā vedanā**': '**avijjāpaccayā phasso, avijjāpaccayā vedanā'.**

What do all these indicate? They indicate that we cannot ignore the temporality. So, the reason for all these chaos is the misinterpretation of '**akālika**'. This doesn't mean that we have to accept the traditional '**kamma-vipāka** explanation'. If so, how are we to understand **paṭiccasamuppāda**? The answer is: as it is explained

in the **Mahāpadhāna sutta** (DN 14) (to which we will come back later).

On coming to describe the **paṭiccasamuppāda Ñv** says "to begin with, **jāti** is 'birth' and not 're-birth'" (p.20). In the Buddha's teaching when **jāti** is mentioned, it always refers to rebirth (since no god is creating a being for the very first time). He continues "For an **ariyasāvaka**, who, though he sees **paṭiccasamuppāda** for himself, and with certainty (it is **aparapaccayā ñānaṃ**), may still need to accept re-birth on the Buddha's authority. In other words, an **ariyasāvaka** sees birth with direct vision, but does not necessarily see rebirth with direct vision" (p.21). How can this be? Rebirth is an essential part in the teaching, not only rebirth, even one's own birth cannot be seen by anyone. Does that mean the fact that we were born of a mother should be taken on trust or on the authority of someone? These should be known not by the eye of flesh, but by the eye of wisdom. If there is no rebirth Buddha's teaching would be useless, following it also would be useless. If an **ariyasāvaka** cannot see the rebirth as a necessary component in existence then simply he is not an **ariyasāvaka**. So, his assertion "the idea of rebirth is totally irrelevant here" (p.22) is wrong. P.80: "for as long as **paṭiccasam-uppāda** is thought to involve temporal succession, so long is it liable to be regarded as some kind of hypothesis": of course, it is a hypothesis for a **puthajjana** but not for an **ariyasāvaka**. "Past and future only make their appearance with **anvaye ñāṇaṃ**. Not with **dhamme ñāṇaṃ**. 'As it is, so it was, so it will be.' **paṭiccasamuppāda** is just 'As it is'- i.e. the present structure of dependence" (p.80): this again is an error; to become an **ariyasāvaka** he should possess both **dhamme ñāṇaṃ** and **anvaye ñāṇaṃ**.

‘yato kho bhikkave, ariyasāvako evaṃ jarāmaraṇaṃ pajānāti. Evaṃ jarāmaraṇasamudayaṃ… nirodhaṃ…nirodhagāminiṃ paṭipadaṃ pajānāti, idhamassa dhamme ñāṇaṃ. So iminā dhammena viditena <u>akālikena</u> pattena pariyogāḷhena atṭītānāgata nayaṃ neti idhamessa anvaye ñāṇaṃ. Yato kho bhikkhave ariyasāvakassa imāni dve ñāṇāni parisuddhāni honti pariyodātāni dhamme ñāṇañca envaye ñāṇañca, ayam vuccati diṭṭhisampanno…’ (So on for **jāti…saṅkhārā**)

“When, bhikkhus, a noble disciple thus understands aging-and-death, its origin, its cessation, and the way leading to its cessation, this is his knowledge of the principle. By means of this principle that is seen, understood, **akālikena**, fathomed, he applies the method to the past and to the future thus… This is his knowledge of entailment. When, bhikkhus, a noble disciple has purified and cleansed these two kinds of knowledge—knowledge of the principle and knowledge of entailment—he is then called a noble disciple who is accomplished in view, accomplished in vision, who has arrived at this true Dhamma…”

(ñāṇavatthu sutta, SN II 1.4.3, 88)

‘Jātipaccayā jarāmarṇanti ñāṇaṃ, asati jātiyā natthi jarāmaraṇanti ñāṇaṃ, atītampi addhānam jātipaccayā… anāgatampi addhānaṃ jātipaccayā… (So on for **bhavapaccaya… avijjāpaccayā…)**

“The knowledge: ‘Aging-and-death has birth as its condition.’ The knowledge: ‘When there is no birth, there is no aging-and-death.’ The knowledge: ‘In the past too aging-and-death had birth as its condition.’ The knowledge: ‘In the past too, had there been no birth, there would have been no aging-and-death.’ The knowledge: ‘In the future too aging-and-death will have birth as

its condition.' The knowledge: 'In the future too, should there be no birth, there will be no aging-and-death.' "

(**dutiyañānavatthu sutta** SN II.1.4.4, 92)

This is the timeless nature (**akālika**) of **paṭiccasamuppāda** (i.e. **Dhamma**). His misunderstanding of **akālika** is again reflected in the statement "what temporal succession is **akālika"** (p.86), **akālika** doesn't mean no-temporality but free from temporality.

'katamo ca bhikkhave, patticcasamuppādo? Jātipaccayā jarāmaraṇaṃ. Uppādā vā tathāgatānaṃ anūppādā vā tathāgatānaṃ ṭhitāva sā dhātu, dhammaṭṭhitatā dhammaniyāmatā idapaccayatā. Bhavapaccayā jāti… avijjāpaccaya saṅkhārā… iti kho bhikkhave yā tatra tathatā avitathatā anaññatā idapaccayatā, ayaṃ vaccati bhikkhave paticcasamuppādo.

Katame ca bhikkhave, paṭiccasamuppannā dhammā? Jarāmaraṇaṃ bhikkhave, aniccaṃ saṅkhataṃ paticcasamuppannaṃ khayadhammaṃ vayadhammaṃ virāgadhammāṃ. Jāti… avijjā…

"And what, bhikkhus, is dependent origination? 'With birth as condition, aging-and-death [comes to be]': whether there is an arising of Tathāgatas or no arising of Tathāgatas, that element still persists, the stableness of the Dhamma, the fixed course of the Dhamma, specific conditionality… With existence as condition, birth… Thus, bhikkhus, the actuality in this, the inerrancy, the not-otherwiseness, specific conditionality: this is called dependent origination.

And what, bhikkhus, are the dependently arisen phenomena? Aging-and-death, bhikkhus, is impermanent, conditioned, dependently arisen, subject to destruction, vanishing, fading away, and cessation. Birth… Ignorance …"

(**paccaya sutta**, SN II 1.2.10, 40)

The above **Sutta** clearly identifies **paṭiccasamuppāda** with the twelve-factor series. So **paṭiccasamuppāda** is not a structural principle that can be applied to many things. It also identifies **paticcasamuppānnā dhammā** as the twelve factors of the series.

Instead of giving our own interpretations, to understand **paṭiccasamuppāda** we should find out how Buddha has explained it. In **Nidāna/ Abhisamaya Samy**. he gives an analysis (**vibhaṅga**) of the twelve items in the **paṭiccasamuppāda** (interestingly **Ñv** has almost completely ignored this Sutta, may be because it explains things contrary to his interpretation). The **Sutta** starts as:

paṭiccasamuppādaṃ vo bhikkhave desissāmi vibhajissāmi… katamo ca bhikkhave paticcasamuppādo? Avijjāpaccaya saṅkhārā, saṅkhārāpaccayā viññāṇaṃ … bhavapaccayā jāti, jātipaccayā jarāmaraṇaṃ soka-parideva-dukkha-domanassupāyāsā sambhavanti. Evametassa kevalassa dukkhakkhandhassa samudayo hoti'

"And what, bhikkhus, is dependent origination? With ignorance as condition, volitional formations [come to be]; with volitional formations, consciousness … with existence as condition, birth; with birth as condition, aging-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair come to be. Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering" **- (vibhaṅga sutta,** SN II 1.1.2, 4)

So even from this **Sutta** it is clear what Buddha meant by **paṭiccas-amuppāda**. It's none other than just this series. Now let's look at what he meant by **jarāmaraṇa** and **jāti**

> "And what, bhikkhus, is aging-and-death? The aging of the various beings in the various orders of beings, their growing old, brokenness of teeth, greyness of hair, wrinkling of skin, decline of vitality, degeneration of the faculties: this is called aging. The passing away of the various beings from the various orders of beings, their perishing, breakup, disappearance, mortality, death, completion of time, the breakup of the aggregates, the laying down of the carcass: this is called death. Thus this aging and this death are together called aging-and-death.
>
> "And what, bhikkhus, is birth? The birth of the various beings into the various orders of beings, their being born, descent [into the womb], production, the manifestation of the aggregates, the obtaining of the sense bases. This is called birth"
>
> - (**vibhaṅga sutta,** SN II 1.1.2, 4)

Now let's look at how **Ñv** interprets them "the **puthajjana** sees a 'self' to whom the words 'birth' and 'death' apply" (p.21), "he does not see that birth and death depend upon his 'being a self' (**bhavapaccayā jāti** and so on)" (p.22). "the **arahat**… does not think 'I am' he also does not think 'I was born' or 'I shall die'. In other words, he sees no 'self' or even 'I' for the words birth and death to apply to. This is **jātinirodha** and **jarāmaraṇanirodha**." (p.21). So, what **jāti-samudaya** and **jarāmaraṇa-samudaya** (i.e. arising of birth, old age and death) is the thinking of birth, old age and death. On p.81 he explicitly says so: "so long as there are the thoughts 'I was born', 'I will die' there is birth and death". If so, then one cannot stop arguing:

then by merely by stop thinking of them one will achieve the cessation of birth, old age and death! According to the above **Sutta** passage it is very clear that Buddha was not speaking of a hypothetical birth, old age and death, but of real and palpable birth, old age and death which everyone will experience and come to know by himself or by observing other people. This is what suffering is. If suffering is hypothetical then Huxley's utopia with sex and mescaline would work. The last item of **paṭiccasamuppāda** is also not just old age and death, there are also **soka-parideva-dukkha-domanassa-upāyāsā** (sadness, crying, pain, sorrow, lamentation). Does suffering arise when we think 'I will get sick, I might cry, I will feel sad, I might lament'? No! We ourselves feel pain, sorrow, sadness, we get sick and decrepit. **Ñv** has also taken birth together with old age-death and does not show how birth causes old age and death, simply because it cannot be shown according to his interpretation.

Ñv's concept on **bhava** is also rather strange. "The puthujjana takes what appears to be his 'self' at its face value; and so long as this goes on he continues to be a 'self', at least in his own eyes (and in those of others like him). This is bhava or 'being'. The arahat has altogether got rid of asmimāna (not to speak of attavāda), and does not even think 'I am'. This is bhavanirodha, cessation of being. And since he does not think 'I am' he also does not think 'I was born' or 'I shall die'." (p.21), so if we stop thinking 'I was born' or 'I shall die' then we should be able to attain **nibbāna**! (and during the sleep too we must be attaining **nibbāna**). And he concludes by getting rid of **asmimāna, bhava** and **jāti** and **Jarāmaraṇa** cease as well. Even though this does happen, the connection is not direct, but happens in the way as it is explained in **paṭiccasamuppāda**. Since the **puthujjana** assumes a 'self' because of **avijjā** we are compelled to say (according to his interpretation) **avijjā** (or **asmimāna**) **nirodhā**

bhavanirodho, avijjā (or **asmimāna**) **nirodhā jātinirodho, avijjā** (or **asminā**na) **nirodhā jarāmaraṇanirdho.** What **paṭiccasamuppāda** is this? Doesn't Buddha say something else? In the **vibhaṅga sutta bhava** is explained as:

> **'katamo ca bhikkhave, bhavo? Tayome bhikkhave bhavā: kāmabhavo, rūpabhavo, arūpabhavo. Ayam vuccati bhikkhave bhavo'**
>
> ("And what, bhikkhus, is existence? There are these three kinds of existence: sense-sphere-existence, form-sphere-existence, formless-sphere-existence. This is called existence.")

Bhava is further explained in AN (AN 3.2.3.6):

> **'Bhavo bhavoti bhante, vuccati. kittāvatā nu kho bhante bhavo hotīti**
>
> **kāmadhātuvepakkañca Ānanda, kammaṃ nābhavissa api nu kho kāmabhavo paññāyethāti? No hetam bhante Iti kho Ānanda, kammaṃ kettaṃ, viññāṇaṃ bījaṃ, taṅhā sineho avijjānīvaraṇānam sattānaṃ taṅhā saṃyojanānaṃ hīnāya dhatuyā viññāṇaṃ patiṭṭhitaṃ evaṃ <u>āyatiṃ</u> punabbhavābhinibbatti hoti.**
>
> **Rūpadhātu…rūpa bhavo… Majjhimāya dhātuyā…**
>
> **Arūpadhātu… arūpa bhavo… panītāya dhātuyā…'**

This clearly show that it's the future birth (i.e., rebirth, these two words means the same thing) that is caused by **bhava**. So how can we reject temporality?

On p.22 **Ñv** gives an example to show "how the words birth and death are avoided when the **arahat** is spoken of". But if for the **arahat** there is no death, the answer Buddha should give to the king is; "for one who is born, great king, there is other than ageing-and-death. Those monks, who are worthy ones, destroyer of the cankers… they have no ageing- and-death". But this is not what we see. Breaking up of body is death (see the above definition of death in **vibhañga sutta**). It's the future birth and death that are ceased for him.

Let's look at an argument he raises on p.81. On p.21 he say "re-birth that is at each moment awaiting a living individual who now has **taṅhā**", so he accepts the fact that the birth of a person depends on **taṅhā** in his earlier life (so said in the second noble truth as well: **yāyaṃ taṅhā ponobhavikā**). But on p.81 he says "But to endow his birth with a condition in the past—i.e. a cause—is to accept this 'somebody' at its face value as a permanent 'self'; for cessation of birth requires cessation of its condition, which, being safely past (in the preceding life), cannot now be brought to an end". Clearly this contradicts with what he has said earlier and he tries to imply (may be for the arguments sake) that doctrine of rebirth teaches a permanent self. If we are not entitled to give a previous cause for the birth of a person, then either he was created by a divine power or he was born purely due to physical reasons (as materialists say). Of course once someone is born because of a previous reason, and since he is already born now, there is no possible way for him to end or cancel out his own birth (which has taken place and history now). Yes, definitely that particular birth 'cannot now be brought to an end', only **āyatiṃ punabbhavābhinibbatti** (future rebirth) can be brought to an end. So this argument of **sassatadiṭṭhi-ucchedadiṭṭhi** is completely baseless.

Now let's look at the other definitions in the **vibhañga sutta**.

"And what, bhikkhus, is clinging? There are these four kinds of clinging: clinging to sensual pleasures, clinging to views, clinging to rules and vows, clinging to a doctrine of self. This is called clinging.

"And what, bhikkhus, is craving? There are these six classes of craving: craving for forms, craving for sounds, craving for odours, craving for tastes, craving for tactile objects, craving for mental phenomena. This is called craving.

"And what, bhikkhus, is feeling? There are these six classes of feeling: feeling born of eye-contact, feeling born of ear-contact, feeling born of nose-contact, feeling born of tongue-contact, feeling born of body-contact, feeling born of mind-contact. This is called feeling.

"And what, bhikkhus, is contact? There are these six classes of contact: eye-contact, ear-contact, nose-contact, tongue-contact, body-contact, mind-contact. This is called contact.

"And what, bhikkhus, are the six sense bases? The eye base, the ear base, the nose base, the tongue base, the body base, the mind base. These are called the six sense bases.

"And what, bhikkhus, is **nāmarūpa**? Feeling, perception, volition, contact, attention: this is called **nāma**. The four great elements and the form derived from the four great elements: this is called **rūpa**. Thus this **nāma** and this **rūpa** are together called **nāma-rūpa**.

"And what, bhikkhus, is consciousness? There are these six classes of consciousness: eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-

consciousness, tongue-consciousness, body-consciousness, mind-consciousness. This is called consciousness.

"And what, bhikkhus, are the volitional formations? There are these three kinds of volitional formations: the bodily volitional formation, the verbal volitional formation, the mental volitional formation. These are called the volitional formations.

"And what, bhikkhus, is ignorance? Not knowing suffering, not knowing the origin of suffering, not knowing the cessation of suffering, not knowing the way leading to the cessation of suffering. This is called ignorance."

Now we will follow DN 14 and try to understand **paṭiccasamuppāda**.

"Alas, this world has fallen into trouble, in that it is born, ages, and dies, it passes away and is reborn, yet it does not understand the escape from this suffering aging-and-death. When now will an escape be discerned from this suffering aging-and-death?"

(**vipassi sutta** SN II 1.1.4, 8)

How does old age-death arise? How do they come to be?

If someone is born then old age and death are inevitable. Because of birth they arise. If he was not born, then there would not be old age and death.

But how does he get born? Why is he born?

Because (as explained in the above AN 3.2.3.6) there was **kamma** that he has done, whose results (**vipāka**) he has to go through in the sensual plain (by being born as a man).

But why does one do **kamma** that leads to be born in the sensual plain?

Because he has **upādāna** (i.e., **kāmūpādāna, diṭṭhūpādāna, sīlabbatūpādāna, attavādūpādāna.** (**Ñv** has only considered **attavādūpādāna** (p.21), but the other three also (Especially **kāma-upādāna**) cause actions to be committed that lead to birth). Because of this grasping he does various acts, good and bad.

But why does he hold onto these things?

Because he has desire (**taṅhā** / craving) for those things. If he doesn't have desire, he will not hold onto them.

Why does desire arise for them?

Because he gets pleasure from them, so he desires them. If there were no pleasurable feeling (or other feelings) he will have no desire for them.

How does he get this pleasurable (or other) feeling from them?

Because of contact (between internal sense bases and their corresponding external bases). If there were no contact, there will be no feeling.

How does contact arise?

Because of the existence of the six sense bases. If there were no six sense bases there will be no contact.

How does six sense bases come into be?

Because of this body (**rūpa**) with its mental factors (**nāma**: the factors which make it possible for experience to occur in the sense

bases. Which indeed is the cause for the sense bases to be sense bases. The use of the words 'mental factors' is a crude approximation). If **nāma-rūpa** is not there, there will be no sense bases.

What cause **nāma-rūpa** to be? How do they arise? Because of **viññāṇa** they arise (the body becomes a living body (with its mental factors) that is liable to have experience because of consciousness (**viññāṇa**). If there is no **viññāṇa** this will be just a dead body).

How does **viññāṇa** exist. What supports it? It's this body with **nāma** that supports **viññāṇa** to be.

So here we have an interdependence for a being to be. Once a being is born this interdependence cause him to persist. But what happens when he passes away? how does the first **viññāṇa** appear in a new being? This phenomenon is described by '**saṅkhārāpaccayā viññāṇaṃ**'.

Before delving into this matter let's look at certain statements made in Notes. On p.27 quoting '**vedanā samy**. i, 9' he says "**saṅkhata** is **anicca**" which of course is right, but "to be **saṅkhata** and to be **paṭiccasamuppanna** are the same thing" is incorrect. **saṅkhata** means 'made up' or 'fabricated', **paṭiccasamuppanna** imply a dependence (on something else) 'to arise' and then 'to be'. The formula '**imasmiṃ sati idaṃ hoti**…' may not apply for a **saṅkhata**. A **paṭiccasamuppanna** is a **saṅkhata** but a **saṅkhata** may not be a **paṭiccasamuppanna.** For example, a tree or the chair I'm sitting on is **saṅkhata**, but not **paṭiccasamuppanna**, for it to be so 'when this is there, this is' should apply. But what other thing must exist for the chair to be? Buddha has specifically mentioned what **paṭiccasamuppannā** are in the **paccaya sutta**

(quoted above) and **paṭiccasamuppāda** was taught to teach how suffering arise and how to end it. It is not concerned with anything else. The saying "the purpose of **paṭiccasamuppāda** formulations, namely to show, by the indirect method of §12, that all the items mentioned there in are impermanent" is also wrong. The purpose of **paṭiccasamuppāda** (as just mentioned above) is to show how the **dukkha** arises and then to show how the deliverance from it can be achieved. The first part starts from '**avijjāpaccayā**…' is called the arising (**samudaya** - of suffering) and ends: 'such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering'. The second part starts with **avijjāyatveva asesa-viraga-nirodhā**…' is called the cessation (**nirodhā** - of suffering) and ends: 'such is the cessation of this whole mass of suffering'. This is further explained in the AN 3.2.2.1:

> "what monks, is the noble truth of arising of suffering? With ignorance as condition, **saṅkhārā** (come to be)… such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering. This monks, is called the noble truth of arising of suffering.
>
> What monks is the noble truth of cessation of suffering? With the remainderless fading away and cessation of ignorance comes cessation of **saṅkhārā**… such is the cessation of this whole mass of suffering. This monks, is the noble truth of cessation of suffering"

On page 26 it is said "Belief in 'self', in exactly the same way, is the condition for consciousness, and when it altogether ceases the word consciousness no longer applies. Thus, with cessation of these particular intentions there is cessation of consciousness. The arahat, however, still lives, and he has both intentions (or, more generally, determinations) and consciousness; but this consciousness is niruddha, and the intentions (or

determinations) must similarly be accounted as 'ceased' ". Now to say that **arahats viññāṇa** is ceased but also exists is a contradiction. A ceased thing cannot exist. And also, since belief in a 'self' is **avijjā**, here again we have '**avijjāpaccayā viññāṇaṃ**'. Suffering comes to a complete end only when the consciousness is utterly ceased. As long as it exists there will be experience. Experience means feelings. At the final extinction when consciousness ceases altogether complete end of suffering is achieved. There is an interesting dialog between **ven. Sāriputta** and **ven. Udāyi** which will shed some light on this. **Ven. Sāriputta** exclaims "this extinction is pleasant; this extinction is pleasant". "Friend **Sāriputta**, how come there is pleasantness where there is no feeling." "That itself is the pleasantness friend, where there is no feeling."

On page 29 we have: "**paṭiccasamuppāda** is, in fact, a structural principle, and not one or another specific chain of **saṅkhārā**. It is thus an over-simplification to regard any one given formulation in particular terms as **paṭiccasamuppāda**."[1] Have the Buddha over-simplified things in the above **suttas?** Whom are we to trust, Buddha or **Ñv**? In many other **suttas** (in **Abhisamaya samy**, MN 38 etc…) we see that **paṭiccasamuppāda** has been identified with this particular formula. So, it is not a 'structural principle with widely different applications' (p.30), but Buddha used this term (i.e., **paṭiccasamuppāda**) specifically to identify this series and nothing else. On the same page it is said: "**saṅkhārapaccayā**, however, can be understood in a different way: instead of 'dependent upon a

[1] 1 In **Sn** 653 the words **paṭiccasamuppāda** and **kammavipākakovidā** are used in their literal meanings. So they simply mean: 'Seeing (these designations being) arisen from a reason (cause)' and 'skilled in result of actions' (for action's result is the designation).

collection of particular **saṅkhārā**', we can take it as meaning 'dependent upon the fact that there are such things as **saṅkhārā.**' ", but there is no such meaning in it. It simply means 'with **saṅkhārā** as condition' and that's all. What **Ñv** is doing here is, since he has to build up some connection between **saṅkhārā** and **viññāṇa** without referring to other items in the series (which according to his interpretation should do, e.g. **saṅkhārapaccayā nāmarūpaṃ, saṅkhārapaccayā saḷāyatanaṃ** etc…), he groups **viññāṇa** and everything below it together in to a one group and since all the items in it are '**saṅkhārapaccaya** items' (according to his interpretation), he conclude that the whole group can be identified by its head (i.e. **viññāṇa**) and say '**saṅkhārapaccaya viññāṇaṃ**' (to mean that all the items in the group are **saṅkhārapaccayā**). So, he says: "if therefore, we wish to express this fact, all we have to say is **saṅkhārapaccayā viññāṇaṃ**" (p.30). Then he comes to a very strange conclusion: "**saṅkhārapaccayā viññāṇaṃ** is **paṭiccasamuppāda**". Buddha hasn't said anything like this anywhere. Since seeing **paṭiccasamuppāda** is seeing the **Dhamma**, then the only thing that has to be done to see **Dhamma** is to see the **viññāṇa**! And he expands it "But in all experience, as its fundamental categories and basic **saṅkhārā**, there are **viññāṇa**, **nāmarūpa**, and so on." (p.30). Is there birth in every experience? Is there death in every experience? Then he goes on to say "all experience is intentional" (p.30). So, by intention (i.e., **cetanā**, which has been equalled to **saṅkhāra**) experience occur and experience is **paṭiccasamuppāda** and by taking "**viññāṇa** and **paṭiccasamuppāda** are one" (p.31), he concludes: "This then is the meaning of **saṅkhārāpaccayā viññāṇaṃ**" (P.31. what he has done is he has equated intention to **saṅkhāra** and experience to **viññāṇa**). To begin with all experience is not intentional, **cetānā** is not synonymous with **saṅkhāra**, experience is not **paṭiccasamuppāda**, and **paṭiccasamuppāda** is not **viññāṇa**.

On P.31 §22 he discusses the contradiction which his statement: "**viññāṇa** ceases to exist when **saṅkhārā** of all kinds have ceased" (P.31) brings in. Though **arahat's viññāṇa** is 'ceased' (since the **arahat** is still alive) he breaths (which is **kāyasaṇkhārā**). In order to bypass this problem he simply says "actually and in truth there is, even in this very life, no **arahat** to be found". But can't anyone see an **arahat**? Can't he be touched and felt? What **Avyākata samy**. 2 says is the same thing that is said in the **Vajirā sutta**. Taking each of the **pañcakkhandhā** Buddha shows that a permanent 'self' of **Tathāgata** cannot be found in them. So '**saccato thetato**' a **Tathāgata -** who could be identified with a permanent 'self' - is not to be found. In **Avyākata samy**. 1, **ven. khemā** shows that by which **pañcakkhandhā** the **Tathāgata** is identified with, these **pañcakkhandhā** are not going to arise again, so the four possibilities of after death does not apply to him.

"In the same way, when there is no longer any apparent 'self' to be contacted, contact (phassa) is said to have ceased." (p.32): this is also not correct. Since **arahat** has sense bases he do has contact, but these contacts don't touch his heart; whatever the touch that touches him, his mind remains untouched. That is what meant by **Udāna** ii, 4 (p.32)[1]. On all occasions Buddha has described **phassa** as the coming together of eye, form and eye consciousness etc. but on p.84 **Ñv** says: "But it is probably wrong to suppose that we must therefore understand the word **phassa**, primarily at least, as contact between these three things." He definitely is shooting over the mark. And then he gives his own interpretation "this contact between me and things is **phassa**" (p.84), "…**phassa** is understood as 'contact between subject and object' " (P.84). But what is to be understood by

[1] It was **bhante Ñd** who explained this to me.

'me' or 'subject'? Is it my mind? Or is it my body? What he wants to do is try to remove the six sense bases from the **phassa**! Impossible! (on p.84 he says in DN 15 "**nāmarūpapaccayā phasso** is discussed without reference to **saḷāyatana**", but when you mention **nāma-rūpa** the **saḷāyatana** is already implied, (and of course you have to take **rūpa** as body, not matter. MN 28 clearly says it is because of eye and form that eye-consciousness come to be). "But when (as commonly) phassa is interpreted as 'contact between sense-organ and sense-object, resulting in consciousness'—and its translation as '(sense-) impression' implies this interpretation—then we are at once cut off from all possibility of understanding **phassanirodha** in the arahat" (p.85): this is so only according to his interpretation, where everything has to come in to be and disappear together all at once. Here again since the contact is between subject and object (and subject comes in to be because of **avijjā**), we have '**avijjāpaccayā phasso**'. For the remark "for the question whether or not the eye is the subject is not even raised" (p.86) it should be asked didn't the Buddha advice to consider eye as '**netaṃ mama, nesohamasmi, na meso attā**'? "This epistemological interpretation of phassa misconceives the **Dhamma** as a kind of natural-science-cum-psychology that provides an explanation of things in terms of cause-and- effect." (p.86): if this is true, whether we agree or not, **Dhamma** will then become natural-science-cum-psychology, and we have to agree that the Buddha was misconceived! Later he states "It must, of course, be remembered that **phassanirodha** in the **arahat** does not mean that experience as such (**pañcakkhandhā**) is at an end. But, also, there is no experience without **phassa**" (p.86) and "there is, and there is not, contact in the case of the **arahat**, just as there is, and there is not, consciousness." (p.86), now where is the law of contradiction? On p.85 it is said "but normal experience is always multiple, and other faculties (touch and so on) are engaged at the

same time", if so, then there will be several consciousness at the same time, which will lead to the conclusion that several minds can exist in a person simultaneously. (For there should be two different feelings and perceptions corresponding to the two consciousness). Even though we feel as we see and hear at the same time (e.g., while watching a movie) we don't hear while we see, nor see things while we hear. Just like a multitasking single processor computer seem to do several things at the same time (which it doesn't, but shift from one program to another very quickly) we also feel that we listen, see, taste or even smell at the same time. But if we reflexively and carefully observe our experience, we will come to know that this is not so.

On p.33 it is stated: "**hetū**, being nothing else than **saṅkhāra**, have **avijjā** as condition". So **hetū = saṅkhārā** . The above interpretation is forced and not needed. The lines of the verse simply say: "of the things that originate with causes **Tathāgata** explained those causes, and also their cessation". I.e., the Buddha teaches the causes of those things that have arisen from causes, and also the cessation of those causes which leads to the cessation of those things. This is none other than the basic formula of **paṭiccasamuppāda: 'Imasmiṃ sati idaṃ hoti**…'. That is why on hearing this **ven. Sāriputta** and **Moggallāna** became **sotāpannas**. The identifications: **hatū** is **saṅkhārā, 'tesam hetuṃ**' is therefore **avijjā**, and '**tesam yo nirodho**' is cessation of **avijjā**, is certainly taking things too far. On p.33 it is further said "**avijjāpaccayā saṅkhārā** will thus mean **paṭiccasamuppāda** depends upon non-seeing of **paṭiccasamuppāda**". So here **saṅkhārā** has been equated to **paṭiccasamuppāda**. Since earlier we saw that **viññāṇa** being equated to **paṭiccasamuppāda**, now we have **viññāṇa** is **saṅkhārā**. This again will lead us to **saṅkhāra-paccayā saṅkhārā**.

So how are we to understand **saṅkhārapaccayā viññāṇaṃ**? We saw earlier that there is an interdependence between **viññāṇa** and **nāmarūpa**. For any living being, whether it is an **arahat** or a **puthujjana**, this is the situation. As long as that person lives, this is all that is needed for the **viññāṇa** (and thus the person) to exist. It also had to be said that **viññāṇa** is not a constant unit, but rise and fall very quickly. As one **viññāṇa** falls another arises, when that falls another arises, so it is called a stream of **viññāṇa** (**viññāṇasotaṃ**). If the **viññāṇa** does not need any other support for it to be other than **nāmarūpa**, what happens when that person passes away and born again? What supports the **viññāṇa** then? In **cetanā sutta** (SN II 1.4.8, 102) it says:

> **'yañca ceteti, yañca pakappeti, yañca anuseti, ārammaṇametaṃ hoti viññāṇassa ṭhitiyā. Ārammaṇe sati patiṭṭhā viññāṇassa hoti, Tasmiṃ patiṭṭhite viññāṇe virūḷhe āyatiṃ punabbhavābhinibbatti hoti. Āyatiṃ punabbhavābhinibbattiyā sati āyatiṃ jāti-jarāmaraṇaṃ sokaparidevadukkhadomanasupāyāsā sambhavanti. Evametassa kevelassa dukkhakkhandhessa samudayo hoti**.'

So, these intentions, mental constructions, tendencies provide a support for **viññāṇa** to stand and when there is a base to stand it grows and this **patiṭṭhita viññāṇa** is the cause for future rebirth (**āyatiṃ punabbhavābhinibbatti**). In DN 28: **Sampasādanīya sutta** describe consciousness stream uncut in both ends based in this world and the other world. The **Hāliddikāni sutta** (SN III 1.1.1.3, 14) explains the support or home of **viññāṇa** as **rūpadhātu, vedanādhātu, saññādhātu** and **saṅkhāradhātu**. The idea is well explained in the **bīja sutta** (SN III 1.2.1.2, 94):

"Consciousness, bhikkhus, while standing, might stand engaged with form; based upon form, established upon form, with a sprinkling of delight, it might come to growth, increase, and expansion. Or consciousness, while standing, might stand engaged with feeling … engaged with perception … engaged with volitional formations; based upon volitional formations, established upon volitional formations, with a sprinkling of delight, it might come to growth, increase, and expansion.

"Bhikkhus, though someone might say: 'Apart from form, apart from feeling, apart from perception, apart from volitional formations, I will make known the coming and going of consciousness, its passing away and rebirth, its growth, increase, and expansion'—that is impossible."

So, it is clear that based on these, **viññāṇa** stands stable, with the moisture of delight (**nandi**) **viññāṇa** grows, develop and expands. Now these are **pañcupādānakkhandhā** and we saw in **SAṄKHĀRA** that **pañcupādānakkhandhā** can be called **saṅkhārā**. There we saw how the mental constructions stained by **avijjā** reconstruct the constructed. **Pārileyyaka sutta** (SN III 1.2.3.9, 160) specifically state that mental constructions contaminated with **avijjā** are called **saṅkhārā**.

"Here, bhikkhus, the uninstructed worldling, who is not a seer of the noble ones and is unskilled and undisciplined in their Dhamma, who is not a seer of superior persons and is unskilled and undisciplined in their Dhamma, regards form as self. That regarding, bhikkhus, is **saṅkhāro**. That **saṅkhāro** —what is its source, what is its origin, from what is it born and produced? When the uninstructed worldling is contacted by a feeling born of

ignorance-contact, craving arises: thence that **saṅkhāro** is born." (So forth it is explained for all the twenty views of **sakkāyadiṭṭhi**)

From this it can be followed that **puthujjana** creates a self with **pañcupādānakkhandā**. Since these mental constructions are caused by **avijjā** we have **avijjāpaccayā saṅkhārā**. These **saṅkhārā** provide a basis for the **viññāṇa** to grow and thus **viññāṇa** becomes '**patiṭṭhita**'. This expanded, grown **viññāṇa** cause rebirth, and then because of this **viññāṇa**, **nāmarūpa** come to be.

> "Bhikkhus, what one intends, and what one plans (mentally constructs), and whatever one has a tendency towards: this becomes a basis for the maintenance of consciousness. When there is a basis, there is a support for the establishing of consciousness. When consciousness is established and has come to growth, there is a descent of **nāmarūpa**. With **nāmarūpa** as condition, the six sense bases [come to be]… Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering"
>
> (**dutiyacetanā sutta**, SN II 1.4.9, 102)

Now with the complete eradication of **avijjā** no more mental constructions are done based on **avijjā**, thus a 'self' is not seen in the **pañcakkhandhā**. Craving for (or delight in) **pañcakkhandhā** has ceased, so the **viññāṇa** loses the base to grow.

> "But, bhikkhus, when one does not intend, and one does not plan (mentally construct), and one does not have a tendency towards anything, no basis exists for the maintenance of consciousness. When there is no basis, there is no support for the establishing of consciousness. When consciousness is unestablished and does not come to growth, there is no production of future renewed existence. When there is no production of future renewed

existence, future birth, aging-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair cease. Such is the cessation of this whole mass of suffering."

(**Cetanā sutta**, SN II 1.4.8, 102)

"But, bhikkhus, when one does not intend, and one does not plan (mentally construct), and one does not have a tendency towards anything, no basis exists for the maintenance of consciousness. When there is no basis, there is no support for the establishing of consciousness. When consciousness is unestablished and does not come to growth, there is no descent of **nāmarūpa**. With the cessation of **nāmarūpa** comes cessation of the six sense bases…. Such is the cessation of this whole mass of suffering."

(**Dutiyacetanā sutta**, SN II 1.4.9, 102)

In this explanation of **paṭiccasamuppāda** it can be seen that birth (or rebirth) is twice spoken of without the need of **kamma-vipāka**. It was also seen that with the eradication of **avijjā** the whole structure come down one by one.

On pages 475f **Ñv** says that **sekha** cannot be included in **paṭiccasamuppāda**. But there is no reason why he cannot be included, for he still has **avijjā** (if not he is an **arahat**). Since he has **avijjā,** he has **taṅhā** and **upādāna** to a certain degree. So the **sekha** is not irrelevant (p.476), but is part of the **samudaya.** As it was stated earlier even **arahat** has **phassa**, so the answer to the question 'is there **phassa** apart from being **sa-āsava sa-upādāna**?' (p.478) is 'yes, there is'. And the question 'is the **anāgāmi** liable to **phassa** or not? (p.478) can be categorically answered as 'yes', because everyone (including the **arahat**) has **phassa**, otherwise there will be no experience and the consciousness cannot arise. There is no

support from the **suttas** for the **Ñv's** position. For the question 'does the **anāgāmi** have **upādāna**?' (p.476) is not **ṭhapanīya** but can be answered as 'yes', for he has **rūparāga** and **arūparāga**: which leads to **bhava**. To say "we meet with the answer that **upādāna** (including, presumably, **kāmupādāna**) is put aside even by the **sotāpanna**" (p.476) is completely wrong. (Why couldn't **Ñv** observe his own situation, which contradicts this statement?). If not how can **sotāpannas** like **vishākā** go on to have children? This statement also contradicts to what he says on page 279. Though he affirms the above statement on p.480 ("but the **sekha**, unlike **puthujjana**, does see this, so his **upādāna** is seen and is also, therefore an-**upādāna**") we have to say that **sekha** has **upādāna**, for both **sotāpanna** and **sakadāgāmi** have **kāmarāga** and **paṭigha**. Now about **therī sonā** (p.479) to say "she seems to be putting herself back to **anuloma** when she says: **pañcakkhandā pariññātā tiṭṭhanti chinnamūlakā**" is wrong, she is not putting herself in **anuloma** but describe what **arahat** is. **Pañcakkhandhā** are not **sakkāya**, its **pañcupadānakkhandā**.

The **sekha** can be included in **anuloma** and the **arahat** who has come to **anupādisesa-nibbānadhatu** has achieved the complete cessation (**paṭiloma**). It's the living **arahat** that we cannot include in the **paṭiccasamuppāda**. For he doesn't have **avijjā**, so he doesn't conduct **saṅkhārā** based on **avijjā** (only the basic **saṅkhārās** exist for him. i.e. **kāya-vacī-citta saṅkhārā**). So the **viññāṇa** is '**appatiṭṭhita**' and doesn't go to a birth again. Based on this **viññāṇa nāmarūpa** exist and in turn **saḷāyatana, phassa** and **vedanā** exist, but there is no **taṅhā** and **upādāna**. So, his **bhava** concludes with his death (i.e., **bhavasaṅkhāra = āyusaṅkhāra**) and doesn't go beyond. So, there is no future birth and suffering. While living he has to go through bodily suffering and his **bhavanetti** has ceased (**bhavanetti** is

what that takes a person through **bhava**, i.e. **saṃsara**). It can also be mentioned on the passing that **sammādiṭṭhi** (p.476) is not a **diṭṭhi** (a view) but a vision that even an **arahat** has (cf. **Aggivacchagotta sutta** MN 72).

NIBBĀNA

The best way to understand what **nibbāna** is, one should understand the fire simile. Once the fire got extinguished it does not enter in to some sort of mysterious state and 'be', nor can it be said that fire got annihilated. When it is extinguished, it simply goes out. **Ñv** or p.75 points out: "When a fire becomes extinguished (nibbuta) we do not suppose that it enters a mysterious 'transcendental state'; neither are we to suppose such a thing of the person that attains nibbāna". The positivists of **nibbāna** dream of some kind of existence there and **Ñv** very aptly catch their way of thinking (p.78f):

> "even a thoughtful man may like to expect something a little more positive than 'mere extinction' as the *summum bonum*. We shrink before the idea that our existence, with its anguishes and its extasies, is *wholly* gratuitous, and we are repelled by the suggestion that we should be better off without it; and it is only natural that the *puthujjana* should look for a formula to save something from (as he imagines) the shipwreck.
>
> In the Udāna (viii,3 <Ud.80>) nibbāna is spoken of by the Buddha in these terms: **Atthi bhikkhave ajātaṃ abhūtaṃ akataṃ asaṅkhataṃ, no ce taṃ bhikkhave abhavissa ajātaṃ abhūtaṃ akataṃ asaṅkhataṃ nayidha jātassa bhūtassa katassa saṅkhatassa nissaranaṃ paññāyetha.** ('There is, monks, a non-born, non-become, non-made, non-determined; for if, monks, there were not that non-born, non-become, non-made, non-determined, an escape here from the born, become, made, determined, would not be manifest.') 'Such a positive assertion of the existence of the Unconditioned' it is sometimes urged 'must surely imply that nibbāna is not simply annihilation.' Nibbāna,

certainly, is not 'simply annihilation'—or rather, it is not annihilation at all: extinction, cessation of being, is by no means the same thing as the (supposed) annihilation of an eternal 'self' or soul. (See Majjhima xi, 2) And the assertion of the existence of nibbāna is positive enough—but what, precisely, is asserted? In the **Asaṅkhata Samyutta** (i,1 & ii,23 <S.iv,359&371>) we read **Yo bhikkhave rāgakkhayo dosakkhayo mohakkhayo, idaṃ vuccati bhikkhave asaṅkhataṃ/nibbānaṃ**; ('The destruction, monks, of lust, of hate, of delusion—this, monks, is called (the) non-determined/extinction.') and we see that, if we do not go beyond the Suttas, we cannot derive more than the positive assertion of the existence here of the destruction of lust, hate, and delusion. And this is simply a statement that to get rid, in this very life, of lust, hate, and delusion, is possible (if it were not, there would be no escape from them, and therefore—**Aṅguttara** X, viii,6 <A.v,144>—no escape from birth, ageing, and death). And the arahat has, in fact, done so. But if, in our stewing minds, we still cannot help feeling that nibbāna really ought, somehow, to be an eternity of positive enjoyment, or at least of experience, we may ponder these two Sutta passages (only one is given here):

Tisso imā bhikkhu vedanā vuttā mayā, sukhā vedanā dukkhā vedanā adukkhamasukhā vedanā, imā tisso vedanā vuttā mayā. Vuttam kho pan'etam bhikkhu, mayā, Yam kiṭci vedayitaṃ taṃ dukkhasminti. Taṃ kho pan'etaṃ bhikkhu mayā saṅkhārānaṃ yeva aniccataṃ sandhāya bhāsitaṃ... ('There are, monk, these three feelings stated by me: pleasant feeling, unpleasant feeling, neither-unpleasant-nor-pleasant feeling—these three feelings have been stated by me. But this, monk, has been stated by me: 'Whatever is felt counts as unpleasure (suffering)'. That, however, monk, was said by me concerning the

impermanence of determinations...' (See Vedanā Samy. i,9,)) Vedanā Samy. ii,1 <S.iv,216>

And now **Ñd** joins in:

"Let's first consider the Buddha's advice in the **Apaṇṇaka** Sutta (MN 60, MN I 410-1):

"Householders, there are some recluses and brahmins who hold the view 'There is not complete cessation of being'. But, householders, among those recluses and brahmins there are also some who hold the view 'There is complete cessation of being'. Now, what do you think, householders, are not those recluses and brahmins in direct opposition to each other? Yes, Venerable Sir. In regard to this, householders, the wise man considers like this: With regard to those who say, 'There is not complete cessation of being', this is not something I have seen. With regard to those who say, 'There is complete cessation of being', this is not something I have come to know. But if I, not knowing, not seeing, would declare affirmatively: 'This is the truth, all else is false', that would not be appropriate for me. … …"

"(If this is so, then one should consider this:) Those who hold the view 'There is not complete cessation of being', their view is close to lust, close to bondage, close to delighting, close to attachment, close to clinging. Those who hold the view 'There is complete cessation of being' their view is close to non-lust, close to non-bondage, close to non-delighting, close to non-attachment, close to non-clinging. Having considered this, he practises for the purpose of disenchantment with all modes of being, for dispassion, for cessation of all modes of being."

Now, can there be two meanings to the word bhavanirodha, "cessation of being"? Not if we don't look outside of it. Nevertheless, there are some other Sutta passages which could be interpreted in different ways. The famous and much disputed statement "There is the unborn", which continuationists will take to mean "there is an Unborn", i.e. permanent entity. The cessationists, however, would take it to mean "there is the (possibility of gaining) freedom from birth". If we accept this, we are not outside of the range of the known. We are only considering what can be known—the whole range of it. As is said in the Mahanidāna Sutta (DN 15 / II 63): "To this extent, Ānanda, there can be being-born, ageing, dying, falling away and getting reborn; to this extent there can be a way of description, a way of language, a way of making known, a field for understanding; to this extent the round rolls on to manifest a state of being—namely, nāmarūpa together with viññāṇa …" And to bring this to an end is all we are concerned about, because within that there is no escape from dukkha. Then it may be asked "But what then beyond that?" That question has no meaning. Only regarding what is within viññāṇa–nāmarūpa (i.e., the five khandhas) can we ask and answer questions. Only within the "expanse", papañca, can we talk of anything. And if we go beyond that, then we are going beyond the known, and therefore it can only be a belief, a belief that springs from a want, the want that is called bhavataṇhā. But it is for the abandoning of all wants that we practise the Buddha's teaching."

(**Ñd's** 'nocassa' article: appendix ii).

Why the positivists seek a continuation is because they fear that otherwise it would be nothing but annihilation.

"Venerable sir, is there agitation about what is non-existent internally?"

"There is, bhikkhu," the Blessed One said. "Here, bhikkhu, someone has the view: 'That which is the self is the world; after death I shall be permanent, everlasting, eternal, not subject to change; I shall endure as long as eternity.' He hears the Tathāgata or a disciple of the Tathāgata teaching the Dhamma for the elimination of all standpoints, decisions, obsessions, adherences, and underlying tendencies, for the stilling of all formations, for the relinquishing of all attachments, for the destruction of craving, for dispassion, for cessation, for Nibbāna. He thinks thus: 'So I shall be annihilated! So I shall perish! So I shall be no more!' Then he sorrows, grieves, and laments, he weeps beating his breast and becomes distraught. That is how there is agitation about what is non-existent internally."

(**Alagaddūpama sutta**, MN I, 3.2, 324)

But what is there to be annihilated in the first place? To consider **nibbāna** as positive is one extreme, to think of it as negative is the other extreme. Without going to these two extremes **Tathāgata** teaches in between:

"This world, Kaccāna, for the most part depends upon a duality—upon the notion of existence and the notion of nonexistence… 'All exists': Kaccāna, this is one extreme. 'All does not exist': this is the second extreme. Without veering towards either of these extremes, the Tathāgata teaches the Dhamma by the middle: 'With ignorance as condition, volitional formations [come to be]… Such is the cessation of this whole mass of suffering."

(**kaccānagotta sutta**, SN ii 1.2.5, 28)

There are only two suttas that these positivists (or continuationists) use as support for their stand: Ud 8.1 and Ud 8.3, Even though these Suttas don't permit such an explanation they nevertheless interpret them the way they want and ignore hundreds of other Suttas that refute this idea. Instead of trying to re-interpret the suttas the way we want, so to confirm our speculations, we should try to understand what Buddha meant by his discourses and try to understand his point of view.

Finally, we'll turn to a very important article written by Dr. Paul Dhalke called 'Buddhism and pseudo-Buddhism':

> "…But men feel a need to look beyond this life and get an answer to the questions: "Whence? Whither?" According to whether the answer is derived from actuality or whether it overrides actuality and resorts to metaphysical concepts, one distinguishes between a religion of insight and a religion of faith.
>
> True Buddhism exists wherever there is the understanding that in the world process there is nothing whatsoever of the nature of a metaphysical core; an unconditioned, eternal substance and Absolute. The great mystery of force that has provided the ever fresh incentive to the assumption of something transcendental, is solved. Thinking has comprehended itself as Force, and henceforth comprehends the entire world process as something that, in all its activities, is the manifestation of a beginningless conformity to law. Dhamma (Skr: dharma) means the Buddha's Teaching as well as law, thing, phenomenon., and process. Everything in the world is of a conditioned nature, partly in the passive sense (conditioned through external circumstances), and partly in the reflexive sense (conditioned by itself), Conditionally, in this double sense, is expressed in Pali by the term **saṅkhāra**.

There is nothing whatsoever that is unconditioned, a ”thing-in-itself.”

On the other hand, it is characteristic of Pseudo-Buddhism that, while making use of Buddhist technical terms and ideas, it tries to save some sort of an unconditioned, metaphysical or universal principle. These attempts generally start from the concepts of Nibbāna or Parinibbāna.

After one has understood oneself as a beginningless process of combustion, “there remains as the one goal of life, the cessation of this beginningless burning - its extinction. Because man lives, and since time infinite has lived, by reason of the thirst for life (or Craving: **taṇha**). That extinction will only take place when the thirst for life, or Craving, ceases through a penetrative insight into the true nature of life. This state of freedom from craving is Nibbāna, and the moment when the body of such an Arahat, breaks up, is called Parinibbāna, “complete extinction.” What happens is that an ego-process that, from time unfathomable, has lived by power of that thirst for life, has now through insight overcome it finally and, when dying, does no longer assume any new form but becomes extinguished for ever, without any trace. That is the meaning of Parinibbāna in the genuine teaching of the Buddha. But if one derived from it a metaphysical principle, a something into which at death the perfect one enters for ever, a state of immutability, then we are dealing with Pseudo-Buddhism. In that case, illegitimate use is made of Buddhist terminology, for causing a break in the consistency of the Buddha’s thought and for satisfying the yearning of the human mind for something abiding.

Another school of Pseudo-Buddhism makes of the Law (Dhamma or Dharma) a separate entity that directs the world process like a

kind of cosmic power. What is erroneous in this idea, is evident from the "force doctrine" of the Buddha. The world process conveys the impression of a higher lawfulness because in each of its parts and functions it is the law itself. For the rest, the Buddha Himself has said: "Let my Law be a raft to you, for the purpose of escape, not for the purpose of retention."

I can understand a thing only as far as it is conditioned. I understand it wholly if I cognize it as wholly conditioned. Only if one comprehends the world process as through and through conditioned in its nature, as something that carries within itself the conditions of its existence, and extends no roots or feelers into a transcendental beyond, then only is a religion of reason possible. As long as one accepts an unconditioned substance, a religion of faith is present; whether one calls this unconditioned entity God or Parinibbāna or Dharma, does not make any difference. It is, therefore, quite understandable that this Pseudo-Buddhism finds it easy to go hand in hand with pantheistic, mystic or theosophical schools. If I here expressly emphasize that Buddhism has absolutely nothing to do with all this, I do not say so with an intention of belittling these schools. I do so only in order to single out Buddhism as that teaching of reason and understanding which stands out as wholly unique among the numerous faith doctrines.

Life has become completely comprehensible because it has completely comprehended itself. Actuality is cognised as what it is. As such a Teaching of Actuality, Buddhism lays claim to the consideration of modern man."

(Essays and Poems by Dr. Paul Dahlke (wheel No. 77/78), BPS, Kandy)

VIÑÑĀṆAṂ ANIDASSANAṂ

Before delving in to **kevaḍḍha sutta** let's look at a related sutta, the **Ajita pucchā** in **pārāyana.** In it, it was asked

"Wisdom and mindfulness,
and **nāmarūpa**, Venerable Sir,
tell me that, when asked:
"where does it all cease?"

That question which you asked,
Ajita, I tell to you,
about where **nāmarūpa**
cease without remainder:
with cessation of consciousness
there it all ceases." (**Ñ**d, silent sages of old, p.97)

So here it is very clearly stated that with the cessation of **viññāṇa**, **paññā sati** and **nāmarūpa** ceases (uparujjhati). Now in **kevaḍḍha sutta** (DN 11) the question asked is 'venerable sir, where do these four great elements cease without remainder?' As Buddha pointed out this question is essentially wrong. First, you cannot point out a place where matter ceases, for spatiality is determined by matter. If there is space then there is matter, if there is matter then there is space. It's meaningless to speak of a space without matter. The second problem is that we cannot talk about the cessation of external matter. Such a thing cannot be achieved and to talk about it would also be meaningless. So, the question has to be changed to: "where does these four greet elements do not get a footing? And also, where the attributes of matter (long, short, small, large) ceases and where **nāmarūpa** cease without remainder?" Now when we see

the last part of the question, we know we met with its answer in **pārāyana,** that is to say 'with the cessation of **viññāṇa**' (i.e. **nibbāna).** The last line of the answer given in **kevaḍḍha sutta** confirms this ('by the cessation of **viññāṇa,** there they cease'). So, it is obvious that the answer explains **nibbāna** and the first line also should do so. Almost all the translators take **viññāṇaṃ anidassanaṃ** as **anidassanaṃ-viññāṇaṃ,** i.e., they take **anidassana** as on adjective to **viññana.** So, there is a **viññāṇa** (i.e., a **viññāṇa** exists) and it is **anidassana**. (**Ñv** says "**viññāṇaṃ anidassanaṃ** which is the arahat's 'non-indicative consciousness', is also **viññānassa nirodho**. While the arahat yet lives, his consciousness is **niruddha**, or 'ceased' " (p32) and "consciousness is then said to be anidassana, 'non-indicative' (i.e. not pointing to the presence of a 'subject'), or **niruddha**, 'ceased'" (p97). How can a ceased consciousness be 'non-indicative'? **Ñd** says: "Arahants have a special type of consciousness called '**anidassana viññāṇa**'… Arahants can have different personalities because they still have a **viññāṇa**, which connects them to the past and the future."[1]). As soon as this interpretation is assumed the result is a chaos. It is clearly stated in the last line that 'there' **viññāṇa** has been ceased. How can a ceased **viññāṇa** be? It's better to take those two words in the proper order given in the verse and interpret accordingly. So **viññāṇaṃ anidassanaṃ** means that the **viññāṇa** cannot be indicated or seen. Why? Because it has been ceased, gone. **Anantaṃ** means no limitations or boundaries, with the losing of such notions as long, short, large the meaning of the notion 'limit' is also lost. **Sabbatopabhaṃ** (luminous all around) imply the pure, non-defiled nature, only by removing all the defilements can one achieve **nibbāna.** MN 49 clearly indicate that this state

[1] Atulo, bhante Joe, To the end of body and mind, p.20

(**viññāṇaṃ anidassanaṃ anantaṃ sabbatopabhaṃ**) cannot be known through or is not sullied by the four great elements, or various states of being, or by the all-ness of all. Now what is all?

> "And what, bhikkhus, is the all? The eye and forms, the ear and sounds, the nose and odours, the tongue and tastes, the body and tactile objects, the mind and mental phenomena. This is called the all." (sabba sutta, SN IV 1.3.1, 30)

It is also said

> "Where there is no eye, Samiddhi, no forms, no eye-consciousness, no things to be cognized by eye-consciousness, there the world does not exist nor any description of the world.
>
> "Where there is no ear … no mind, no mental phenomena, no mind-consciousness, no things to be cognized by mind-consciousness, there the world does not exist nor any description of the world." (samiddhi sutta, SN IV 1.7.6, 88)

These suttas explain what 'all' is, and with the cessation of all **nibbāna** is achieved. So, it's obvious that MN 49 also speaks of **nibbāna**, of what the **Brahmā** didn't have the slightest idea of. So, all these indicate that **viññāṇaṃ anidassanaṃ** is nothing but the cessation of the very **viññāṇa.**

BHAVA

"But note that 'being' as **bhava**, involves the existence of the (illusory) subject, and with cessation of the conceit (concept) '(I) am', **asmimāna**, there is cessation of being, **bhavanirodha**… It must be noted that the 'existence' of the living arahat is, properly speaking, not **bhava** but **bhavanirodha**, since the conceit '(I) am' has ceased. Strictly, there is no arahat to be found." (p.97) is indeed wrong. Even the Buddha had '**bhava**' or 'being' and this was what he relinquished (**bhavasaṅkhāra**) at **cāpāla ceti** a couple of months before his **parinibbāna** (DN 16).

Tulamatulañca sambhavaṃ- bhavasaṅkhāramavossaji muni
ajjhattarato samāhito - abhindhi kavacamivattasambhavaṃ

> "Which causes equal and unequal (i.e. various things) to arise, that **bhavasaṅkhāra** (what that prepare or determine being), Muni relinquished. Delighting within (i.e. in meditation)) composed, destroyed what cause the arising of oneself (i.e. new being)[1] like an armour."

For a **puthujjana āyusaṅkhāra** is limited but **bhavasaṅkhāra** is indeterminate. For an arahat **bhava** ends with death or the death occurs at the end of **bhava**, for him **bhavasaṅkhāra** and **āyusaṅkhāra** are the same, they end together. What the Buddha did here was he gave up his will to live allowing a certain limited period of time, so that his **bhava** will end then (so the life as well). What ceases at the attainment arahat-hood is '**bhavanetti**'.

[1] Here the Buddha is not referring to himself, but to the function of **bhavasaṅkhāra** (what it usually does).

PARAMATTHASACCA

"**viññāṇanirodha** refers indifferently to **anidassana viññāṇa** (**saupādisesa nibbānadhātu**, which refers to the living arahat: Itivuttaka II, ii,7 <Iti.38>) and to cessation, at the arahat's death, of all consciousness whatsoever (**anupādisesa nibbānadhātu**). **viññāṇa-nirodha**, strictly speaking, is cessation of **viññāṇupādānakkhandha** as **bhavanirodha** is cessation of **pañcupādānakkhandhā** (i.e. **sakkāya-nirodha**), but it is extended to cover the final cessation of **viññāṇakkhandha** (and therefore of **pañcakkhandhā**) at the breaking up of the arahat's body." (p.97-98), "Strictly, we cannot speak of the 'living arahat' or of the 'arahat's death'" (p.98), "It must be noted that the 'existence' of the living arahat is, properly speaking, not **bhava** but **bhavanirodha**" (p.97). There are inherent contradictions in the above statements. First it says the ceased **viññāṇa** again ceases at arahat's death and of which (i.e. arahats death), It says, we cannot speak about (but speaking about what that cannot be spoken about). Then again, the **viññāṇanirodha** has been included in as a part of **bhavanirodha** (because **viññāṇupādānakkhandha** is included in **pañcupādānakkhandhā** as a part of it). From which we can deduce that **viññāṇa** is included in **bhava** as a part of it! And also, there is not only a 'strictly speaking truth' (i.e. **paramatthasacca**,) but also a 'not-strictly speaking truth' (i.e. **sammutisacca**). Even though **Ñv** openly rejects this later commentarial creation of **paramattha-sammutisacca** duality, he tacitly recourse back to it (this he has done in several places). This very usage of 'strictly speaking' and 'non-strictly speaking' truths is itself the very meaning of **paramatthasacca** and **sammutisacca**.

All these confusions in Notes occur because of **Ñv's** 'instantaneous **paṭiccasamuppāda**'. If we allow temporality (as shown earlier), all those errors and confusions vanish.

We can readily agree with what he says in his note on PARAMATTHASACCA, and it is worth quoting the following here:

> "He learns, however, that the Buddha has said that 'actually and in truth neither self nor what belongs to self are to be found'. Since he cannot conceive of the individual except in terms of 'self', he finds that in order to abolish 'self' he must abolish the individual; and he does it by this device. But the device, as we have seen, abolishes nothing… Not the least of the dangers of the facile and fallacious notion 'truth in the highest sense' is its power to lull the unreflecting mind into a false sense of security. The unwary thinker comes to believe that he understands what, in fact, he does not understand, and thereby effectively blocks his own progress." (p.48).

In the given verse (from **Vajirā sutta**) what ven. **Vajirā** says is: just like an assemblage of components is called a chariot, the assemblage of **pañcakkhandhā** is called a **satto** (a being). But this never suggests that by its disassembly the 'self' notion can be removed.

There is only one truth not two (**ekaṃ hi saccaṃ na dutiyamatthi** - Sn 888[1]) and that truth is **nibbāna** (**amosadhammaṃ nibbānaṃ –** Sn 761). **Nāgarjuna** in his '**Mūlamadyamakārikā**' seeks shelter in this dual truth concept to escape from criticism of his opponents saying that this has been preached by the Buddha, which

[1] Verse numbers in **Suttanipāta** vary from edition to edition. These numbers are from 'Buddha Jayanti'.

is not true[1]. The arising of this concept (which has been common to all Buddhist schools) seems to lie in the small marginal Sutta in AN (AN I, 2.1.3.4, 118) which speaks of two types of suttas: **nītatthaṃ** (meaning that is already brought in) and **neyiyatthaṃ** (meaning that should be brought in). Even though the Sutta does not imply such a thing as for the existence of two truths, it is possible for someone to interpret it in the way he wants to find support to his personal views.

[1] Once I asked bhante **Ñd** what he thinks of **Mūlamadyamakārikā** and he said that he didn't like it. This satisfied me for I also didn't like it. This book is an attempt to realize **atakkāvacara** (unattainable by reasoning) **nibbāna** through takka (reasoning). Although this book devastates the premises of **Sarvastivāda**, from the view point of Dhamma, it's completely useless.

NA CA SO

In the note NA CA SO **Ñv** suggest regarding the question 'when a man dies. Who is reborn-he or another?', "the proper way is to reject the question in the first place". But if the question is not answerable, then 'satto' becomes equal to **Tathāgatha**, because 'what happens to **Tathāgata** when he passes away' is also un-answerable (vide **Ayvākata samy.** 1< s.i.v, 379>). So here again **Ñv** has tacitly resorted to the commentary (that also erroneously takes '**Tathāgata'** as **'satto'**). So how are we to answer the above question? In the description of **pubbenivāsānussati ñāṇa** a person recalls his past lives as "I was there with this name, with such feelings and having passed away from there I was born there…" just like a person who leaves his village and visit another village and from there yet another village and so on. So, if that person was later asked "was that you who left this village and visited that village and from there yet another village?" he would not give an answer like "it wasn't me nor another"' nor "it cannot be answered, its **ṭapanīya**", but will answer 'yes'. In a similar way we can answer positively to the initial question as 'yes, it was him'. That doesn't imply that some sort of a changeless and permanent entity is moving on from birth to birth, but rather it's the same stream of **viññāṇa** that continues, similar to how we continued from yesterday to today. (In the latter case the body also persist with the **viññāṇa** stream, whereas on rebirth body discontinues).

PAÑCUPĀDĀNAKKHANDHĀ AND VIÑÑĀṆA-NĀMARŪPA

On p.265 **Ñv** says: "the five items, **rūpa**, **vedanā**, **saññā**, **saṅkhārā**, and **viññāṇa**, can also be regarded as three: **viññāṇa** and **nāmarūpa**, where **nāma** is **vedanā**, **saññā**, and **saṅkhārā**." and in editorial notes it says: "No Sutta reference has been found to support this assertion. In a note (possibly written prior to L. 1) commenting on Khandha Samy. 53: iii,53, the author remarked: 'Thus it seems that the first four aggregates—matter, feeling, perception, determinations—are equivalent to name-&-matter, though the Suttas never say so specifically—a fact that is unusually significant.'" (p.510)[1]. It is indeed tempting to make this equation, but unfortunately such a thing is not allowed in the Dhamma. As indicated in the editorial notes no support for this can be found in the Suttas. If such an equation is possible it would surely have been mentioned in some sutta. There are other problems as well. To make such an equation possible we have to take:

saṅkhāra = (cetanā + phassa + manasikāra)

This clearly is not the case, for phassa is never included in **saṅkhāra.** In fact, **saṅkhāra** arise because of phassa ('**phasso hetu, phasso paccayo saṅkhārakkhandhassa paññapanāya**' **- punnamā sutta**, SN III 1.2.3.10, 171). And also **pañcupādānakkhandhā** includes **upādāna** within them, but **nāmarūpa** doesn't. **Rūpaṃ** is not the same as **rūpūpādanakkhandho**, **vedānā** is not the same as **vedanūpādānakkhandho,** etc. If such an equation is done, the very essence of **pañcupādānakkhandhā** (i.e. **upādāna**) will be lost.

[1] **Ñd** also follow this (vide 'to the end of body and mind' p.81)

Viññāṇa-nāmarūpa serve a different purpose in Dhamma and **pañcupādānakkhandhā** serve a different purpose. Since these purposes are different, they can never be equalled.

Nāma provide the possibility or the potentiality for the body to bear the sense bases. The sense organs become sense bases because of **nāma**. Even though a blind person has eyes, they don't become sensitive because contact, feeling etc. do not arise in association with them. So **nāmarūpa** describe the cause for six sense bases and without them the six sense bases cannot arise. Thus, they become part of the **paṭiccasamuppāda** and explain how the suffering arise and how to eliminate it. **Pañcupādānakkhandhā** are not used to describe the cause for six sense bases, but are used to explain how **puthujjana** creates his 'self-view' (**sakkāyadiṭṭhi**) using them.

BĀHIYOVĀDA

Bāhiya sutta (Ud 1.10 and **saḷāyatana samy. 95, IV, 73**) has baffled many who had tried to understand it.

> "Then, Bāhiya, you should train thus: 'In the seen there shall be just the seen; in the heard there shall be just the heard; in the sensed there shall be just the sensed; in the cognized there shall be just the cognized'—thus, Bāhiya, should you train yourself. When, Bāhiya, for you, in the seen there shall be just the seen...cognized, then, Bāhiya, you (will) not (be) by them (**tvam na tena**); when, Bāhiya, you (shall) not (be) by them, then, Bāhiya, you (shall) not (be) there (**tvam na tattha**); when, Bāhiya, you (shall) not (be) there, then, Bāhiya, you (will) neither (be) here nor yonder nor between the two: just this is the end of suffering."

Let's try to find the meaning of this statement without referring to Sartre or Heidegger. We can agree with **Ñ**v's interpretation given to the first part: "it is when, for us, in the seen there shall be just the seen, and so with the heard, the sensed, and the cognized. And when in the seen is there just the seen? When the seen is no longer seen as 'mine' (etam mama) or as 'I' (eso'ham asmi) or as 'my self' (eso me attā): in brief, when there is no longer, in connexion with the senses, the conceit 'I am'". The purpose of the training taught to **Bāhiya** was to bring his mind under control and to stop 'I making and my making' (**ahiṅkāramamiṅkāra**). This training will lead the trainee to deliverance and the second part explains how this happens. The first part is also a basic a teaching regarding '**indriya-saṃvara**' (i.e., of eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind).

Then it says '(if it is done) then you will not be by them' (**tato tvaṃ Bāhiya, na tena**): a 'self' would not be made by using these internal-external bases; when you would not make a 'self' using those internal-external sense bases, then you **Bāhiya,** will not be there (in them. i.e., in internal or external worlds). So, by this practice the 'self' we assume to be, created using the internal-external sense bases (or **pañcupādānakkhandhā**), dissolves. (**pañcupādānak-khandhā** and internal-external sense bases has the same connotation. It is either one of them that is used to create the 'self' notion. [Cf.: **uppāda sutta** (SN III, 1.1.3.9, 56) and **uppāda suttas** (SN IV, 1.2.9, 28 & SN IV, 1.2.10, 28); **natumhāka sutta** (SN III, 1.1.4.1, 60) and **natumhāka sutta** (SN IV 1.10.8, 172); **puṇṇamā sutta** (SN III, 1.2.3.10, 170) and **upādāna suttas** (SN IV, 1.11.7, 188 & 1.12.10, 228) and **saññojana suttas** (SN IV, 1.11.6, 188 & 1.12.9, 224)]). With the successful completion of this practice one attains **nibbāna** and with complete cessation (**parinibbāna**) 'you will not be in this world, nor in the next world, nor in-between, this itself is the end of suffering'. Everywhere in Dhamma the word '**idha**' is used to indicate this world or this life and '**huraṃ**' is used to denote the next world or next life. '**antarā**' is the between of the two (cf. **antarāparinibbāyi).** There is no reason for us to deviate from these usual meanings here. **Ñv** in his explanation starts from the end and proceed to the beginning in the reverse direction. But this is not allowed in the sutta for the text continually use 'yato-tato' dual ('when this is so –then it will be so' or simply 'when-then'). This defines a step-by-step progressive method, each stage based on the previous stage.

ARIYASĀVAKA

On p.278 **Ñv** explain certain things that an **ariyasāvaka** is capable of doing. But unfortunately (for him) none of his examples suggest those things that they said to exemplify. For example, he says that arahats can commit suicide and call on MN 144 (or **saḷāyatana samy 87**) as such an incident. But the **channovāda sutta** doesn't say nor imply that ven. Channa is an arahat at that time, but on contrary it suggests the opposite. Ven. Channa's answer only implies that he could have been a sekha, but not an arahat ('**cakkhusmiṃ āvuso Sāriputta, cakkhuviññāṇe… nirodhaṃ disvā, nirodhaṃ abiññāya…**'). Since ven. **Sāriputta** didn't had psychic powers, he could not validate Channa's claim. His doubt of ven. Channa's answer or claim can clearly be seen by the fact that he went to the Buddha to ask where Channa was born. It he was confident that Channa was an arahat, he wouldn't have done so. Ven. **Mahācunda** having all the physics powers knew the state of Channa, so he understood that Channa needed to be guided further, so he gave this **ovāda** (advice) to achieve the last stage. If Channa was already an arahat such an advice was not needed by him, and this advice was so instrumental for his deliverance, the Theras included this incident in the canon to be memorized by the later generations. An arahat can bear anything because he doesn't have '**paṭigha**' (so is **anāgāmi**), they don't commit suicide to escape pain. **Ñd** also affirmed that arahats don't commit suicide and suggested that Channa was on the path (to arahat-hood). But since someone on the path is destined to achieve **phala** before death, Channa still didn't need an advice, of which ven. **Mahācunda** saw the need of. So, it is very clear that Channa was not an arahat (or on the path) at the time he committed the act (of

suicide), and he became an arahat during the time of his death (**maraṇakāle**).

The example of the 'drunken **sotāpanna**' in **sarakāni sutta (sotāpatti samy. 24)** is not a **sotāpanna** at all. Buddha clearly say's that he was on the **magga** and that he rectified his virtue to the end of his life (**maraṇakāle**). Someone on the path achieves the **phala** before his death, at least at the time of his death. Buddha's explanation suggests **sarakāni** was a **saddhānusāri** and at the time of his death he attained the fruit and died as a **sotāpanna** ('**sarakāni sakko moraṇakāle pana sikkhaṃ samādiyi**'). The **cakkhu sutta** (SN III 4.1.1, 442) says that someone on the path (of **sotāpatti**) cannot commit an action, of which its **vipāka** has to be experienced in a bad destination (**apāyaṃ vinipātaṃ).** Since taking alcohol itself wouldn't lead to a bad destination (i.e., hell, peta, and animal realm) it is possible for someone on path to take such intoxicants. Though **Ñv** says "as a layman he is capable (contrary to popular belief) of breaking any or all of the five precepts"[1], a sotàpanna will not deliberately do so. If a person on the path will not commit an act that would lead to a bad destination, how could a person on **phala** do so? He might breach lesser rules, but not grave ones. To take the nine things incapable for a **sotāpanna** to do (M 115, iii, 64-5) as the bottom line makes it possible for a **sotāpanna** to become a serial killer! An extreme case like protecting one's family from a killer should be treated with caution. In such a case a **sotāpanna** will fight, but all his intentions would be for defence.

The commentarial tradition holds the view that a monk or a nun who has become a **sotāpanna** would not disrobe

[1] **Ñd** also held a similar view.

because his/her faith has now been firmly established (**mūlajāto -** taken root). But **Ñv** had the view that he could[1], and gives the example of ven. **Citta Hatthisāriputta** (AN vi, 60: iii, 392-9). But this Sutta does not in any way say or even imply that Citta was a **sotāpanna**.

He might have attained the **jhānas** that ven. **Koṭṭhita** describe. The Buddha's remark that Citta would recall the '**nekkhamma**' indicate that this is the case. The **kāmesupalāḷita sutta** (AN 5.1.1.7, AN III, 8) supports the commentarial view. There Buddha explains as long as a newly ordained monk does not have the **sekha bala** (only a sekha has them) he thinks that this monk should be protected by him, just like a mother or a foster mother takes care of a newly born baby. But once the monk has the sekha bala he let the monk be, because he knows that the monk is capable of taking care of himself and that he would not get **pamāda**, just like that same mother or foster mother would let that same child to take care of himself once he has grown up. Even **Ñv's** final decision conform the commentarial view, not his own.

[1] **Ñd** also held a similar view.

63RD VIEW

In the Sabhiya sutta (Sn 3.6, 152) it is said that there are 63 views that recluses get attached to. But in the **Brahmajāla sutta (DN 1)** only 62 are described. What is the 63rd view? **Kñ** takes it as **sammādiṭṭhi** and says that like the raft it should also be given up. But his explanation does not match with Dhamma for **sammādiṭṭhi** is a vision, not a view and even arahats have **sammādiṭṭhi**. The way the term '63 views' is mentioned in the sabhiya sutta indicate that all 63 views are wrong views. In Isidatta sutta[1] (SN IV, 7.1.3, 526) it was asked 'when what is there does the 62 views said in the **Brahmajāla** sutta arise?' The answer given is: 'when there is **sakkāyadiṭṭhi** these views arise, not when **sakkāyadiṭṭhi** is not there'. So, this **sakkāyadiṭṭhi** is the 63rd view (in fact it should be named the view No.1, for it is the root cause of the other views).

[1] It was bhante **Ñd** who pointed out this sutta to me.

UPADHI

On p.32 and p.86 **Ñv** translates upadhi as 'ground', but this does not give the correct meaning. **Kñ** proposes 'assets' which is much better because :

'**Upadhi nidānā pabhavanti dukkhā - ye keci lokasmiṃ anekarūpā**

(various sufferings in the world arise having upadhi as the root).

Ñd translates it as 'appropriations (both subjective and objective)', which does give an accurate meaning. For a formal translation we could suggest: 'things taken as mine (**etaṃ mama**)'.

PAPAÑCA

Ñd translates this as 'spreading out', which does give the root meaning. But in the suttas this word is not used in this meaning. The best translation is what **Kñ** proposes in his 'Concept and Reality in Early Buddhism': 'proliferate thinking'.

NO CASSA

Ñd in his 'no cassa article'[1] translates

> '**no cassa no ca me siyā, na bhavissati na me bhavissati**'
> as
> 'It might not be and there might not be for me; it will not be (and) there will not be for me'.

He takes '**siyā**' as 'might be'. But when we look at the suttas it is used in the meaning of 'is'. In **Puṇṇamā sutta** (SN III 1.2.3.10, 170) it was asked '**Siyā pana bhante pañcupādānakkhandhesu chandarāgavematta-tāti? Siyā bhikkhu'.** Instead of translating this as 'might there be variety in desire and lust for five holding aggregates? There might be bhikkhu' it's better to translate this as 'is there variety in desire and lust for five holding aggregates? There is bhikkhu', because there certainly is variety. There is no need for the Buddha to answer in a doubtful, 'not so sure' manner. Even in **Alagaddūpama sutta (MN 22)** it is more natural to ask 'is there agitation about what is non-existent externally?' and the answer to be 'there is'. In **Saññā sutta** (AN 11.1.7, AN VI, 598) and **Manasikāra sutta** (AN 11.1.8, AN VI, 604) when ven. **Ānanda asks** '**siyā nu kho bhante, bhikkhuno tathārūpo samādhi patilābho…? Siyā Ānanda…**' Buddha certainly would not be doubtful and reply 'there might be', but will categorically assert positively 'there is', because there certainly is such a **samādhi.** Likewise, in the 'no cassa' formula it's better to translate it as:

> 'It is not and there is not for me; it will not be (and) there will not be for me'.

[1] Atulo, bhante Joe, To the end of body and mind, p.70

For the word **assaṃ** the PTS dictionary gives only one reference (Sn 1120). If we are to separate the conjunction as '**apucchiṃ assaṃ**' then here '**assaṃ**' surely doesn't mean 'I might be', but would rather be 'is' (to mean 'I already have asked the Sakyan twice').

How can we be sure that this translation is correct? As **Ñd** suggest, best way to know this is to check the annihilationist view. Now what is the annihilationist view? This view is described in the **pañcattaya sutta** (MN 102):

> "Those good recluses and brahmins who describe the annihilation, destruction, and extermination of an existing being, through fear of identity and disgust with identity, keep running and circling around that same identity."

This clearly indicates that annihilationists declare the non-existence of an existing being in this very life (i.e., **assaṃ** and **siyā** describe a being existing now). So, we can translate the wrong view '**no cassaṃ…**' as: 'I am not, and there is not for me; I will not be (and) there will not be for me'. The practice in the first part of the correct view is directed to see the absence of a self and what belongs to a self, i.e. see '**suññho loko attena vā attanīyena vā**' ('world is empty of a self and what belongs to a self' - **Suññaloka sutta**, SN IV 1.9.2, 120). In **Alagaddūpama sutta** (MN 22) we have '**attani ca attaniye ca saccato thetato anupalabbhamane**' ('when self and what belongs to a self actually and in truth not to be found'). So this first part corresponds to:

> " the instructed noble disciple, does not regard matter as self or self as possessing matter or matter as in self or self as in matter; does not regard feeling... perception... saṅkhāras... consciousness as self or self as possessing consciousness or consciousness as in self or self as in consciousness. He understands as it really is

impermanent matter as impermanent matter… impermanent feeling … impermanent perception … impermanent consciousness as impermanent consciousness… consciousness that is dukkha as consciousness that is dukkha… consciousness that is not self as consciousness that is not self… conditioned consciousness as conditioned consciousness."

(**Udāna sutta**, SN III, 1.2.1.3, 98)

The second part corresponds to:

"He understands as it really is: 'Form will be un-be' …'Feeling will be un-be' …'Perception will be un-be' …'Volitional formations will be un-be' …'Consciousness will be un-be."

(**Udāna sutta**, SN III, 1.2.1.3, 98)

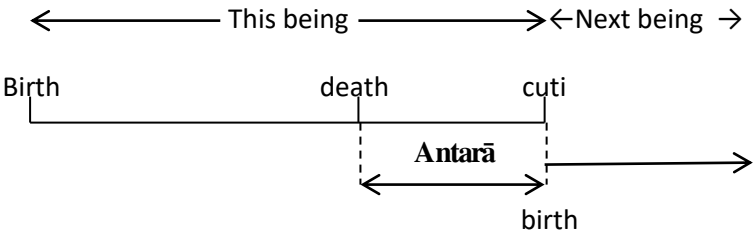
Ñd on P.81[1] says: "**viññāṇa** is one side of it and the four other khandhas (called viññāṇaṭṭḥitiyo or supports of **viññāṇa**) are the other side. They are also summed up as **nāmarūpa**. So the duality is **viññāṇa** – **nāmarūpa**". But in the whole sutta **nāmarūpa** is not even mentioned once. In an earlier note it was shown that **nāmarūpa** cannot be equated to the first four **khandhas**, so his interpretation '**viññāṇa** might not be' seems to take things too far. It should also be kept in mind that **Udāna sutta** occur in the **khandha samy**. which deals with the **khandhas** not with **nāmarūpa** (which appear in the **Nidāna/Abhisamaya samy**.). On P.84[2] **Ñd** says "One might wonder why this practice only leads to anāgāmi-hood and not to arahat-ship. The reason for this is that no cassa uses desire for Nibbāna as its vehicle and at the last stage this desire could become a hindrance." This is not the case, for this sutta does not tell us anywhere that the

[1] ibid
[2] ibid

trainee doesn't go beyond **anāgāmitā,** instead it tells us that he will cut the lower fetters. What this implies is that he will end up being either as an **anāgāmi** or an arahat, for both of them have cut off the lower fetters. The **Purisagati sutta** (AN 7.55) explicitly state that the trainee will end up either as an **anāgāmi** or an arahat.

ANTARĀBHAVA

If the word **antarābhava** means bhava between two bhavas' then the word itself is a contradictory term. It there is a being (bhava) between two beings then it itself is a being not an in-between being. In such a situation the criticism in **Kathāvatthu** 8.2 and the rejection by the Tradition of the **antarābhava** has to be accepted. But if **antarābhava** means a state of being between two lives, then that can be accepted. May be because of this ambiguity that we don't see the word **antarābhava** in the Suttas. Suttas simply use '**antarā**' (as in **antarāparinibbāyi).** A possible way to explain this being is to accept that **cuti** does not take place with death.



Several suttas describe such an existence

i. In the **Kutūhalasālā sutta** (SN IV, 10.1.9, 701) it comes:
"Master Gotama, when a flame is flung by the wind and goes some distance, what does Master Gotama declare to be its fuel on that occasion?" "When, Vaccha, a flame is flung by the wind and goes some distance, I declare that it is fuelled by the wind. For on that occasion the wind is its fuel." "And, Master Gotama, when a being has laid down this body but has not yet been

reborn in another body, what does Master Gotama declare to be its fuel on that occasion?" "When, Vaccha, a being has laid down this body but has not yet been reborn in another body, I declare that it is fuelled by craving. For on that occasion craving is its fuel."

The first question is the example and the second question is the proper question. This indicates that there is an in-between existence between death and rebirth.

ii. The purisagati sutta (AN 7.55) describe the **antarāparinibbāyi** as a **papatikā** (a small piece of ember) is born and extinguished before it being hit on the ground (**anupahacca talaṃ**, i.e. before **upahacca**). So, the **antarāparinibbāyi** comes to extinction before being born (in **suddhāvāsa),** and before **upahaccaparinibbāyi** attains extinction.

iii. Four individuals are described in the AN 4.3.4.1 (AN II, 258). The first person has the five lower fetters, fetters that lead to birth and fetters that lead to being (**bhavapaṭilābhiyāni saṃyojanāni).** He is described as **sakadāgāmi**, the highest of the lot, which includes **puthujjana** and **sotāpanna** as well. Second person doesn't have the five lower fetters but have fetters that lead to birth and being. He is described as **akaniṭṭhagāmino** (this includes all that is born in **suddhāvāsa).** The third person doesn't have neither the lower fetters, nor the fetters that leads to birth but have the fetters that lead to being. He is described as **antarāparinibbāyi.** The fourth person doesn't have any of the fetters and he is the arahat. This sutta clearly indicates that **anāgāmi,** who is an **antarāparinibbāyi** doesn't go to a birth again, but still has **bhava** (being). He achieves **nibbāna** in-between.

TISSO APĀYĀ

All the suttas in the **Theravāda** cannon speak only of three bad destinations (they are: hell, animal realm and **peta** realm) except on three occasions, where they speak of four and the fourth being asura. Inclusion of asura as a bad destination is a later development. There are only five destinations for a being (**pañcagati:** hell, realm of animals, **peta**, human and deva), but there is no asura in it (**Saṅgītī sutta**-DN33). Asura is in fact included in the deva (they are very much similar to Titans in Greek mythology). **Kathāvatthu** 8.1 confirms this point and rejects the claim that asura is a bad destination. Ud 3.7 states that the main consort of Sakka, the king of **Tāvatiṃsa** heaven, is an asura maiden. What kind of purgatory is that where being born in it one can then become the queen of a heaven? Certain Buddhist schools changed their cannons to accommodate this later development and describe six destinations (**chagati**). **Mahāsīhanāda sutta** (MN 12) describe five destinations with examples. Now in the Chinese translation of **Sarvastivāda Madyama Āgama**, the corresponding sutta to **Mahāsīhanāda sutta** contains six destinations with examples. This is a good proof to show that **pāli** cannon is more reliable and authentic than other recensions. Although the **Theravāda** tradition tried to preserve the cannon in its original form, on three occasions (as mentioned earlier) this later idea has managed to squeeze in. These are:

i. The **akkhaṇa sutta** (AN 8.1.3.9, AN V, 128) describe eight occasions where **brahmacariyā** cannot be lived and **Dasuttara sutta** (DN 34) also describe them in the same manner. But the **Saṅgīti sutta** has nine occasions and the extra occasion is asura.

ii. Verse 455 in **Sumedhā Therigāthā** state that there are four **vinipātā**. But it can be observed that this particular **Therigāthā** is not in fact an inspired utterance as a T**herigāthā** should be, but a story of the going forth of a princess, which shows the mark of later composition

iii. In Ratana sutta (Sn 2.1, v.233) it says that there are four **apāyas**, but the corresponding verse in **Mahāvastu** does not have e and f lines and these two lines make the Sn 233 an eight-line verse. So, it can be deduced that these two lines have been added later.

EPILOGUE

As mentioned in the preface the aim of this writing is to demonstrate inadequacies in some explanations given by **Ñv** in his 'Notes on Dhamma' and to provide with some alternative explanations. But it should be reiterated that there is no need to take these as final, and instead the reader is encouraged to investigate Dhamma by his own intelligence. It is possible that the author himself might change his ideas later. There is also no aim to dispute the claim of **Ñv** about his attainment, for what is needed for someone to attain **sotāpatti** is to get rid of **sakkāyadiṭṭhi**.[1]

[1] But there are strong reservations about sister **Vajirā's** claim. Her behaviour is not to be expected from an ariyapuggala, who ought to have wisdom and be a step ahead of common people. Ariyapuggalas should behave more normal than a normal person. That is why it's so difficult to identify an arahat, for he behaves extremely normal.

APPENDIX

1. A LETTER ON PAṬICCASAMUPPĀDA

(The underlining is done by Ñd himself. As it is previously mentioned his views differ from what is stated in this book.)

Akaniṭṭhakuti

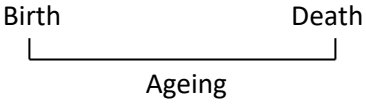
April, 11th 2013

Dear dāyaka ******,

You asked me to inform you if I as having any disagreement with Ajahn Brahm's Paticcasamuppada (Ps) book, so here is what I might say.

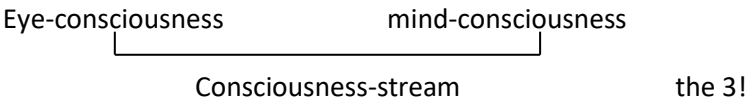
To begin with I found it refreshing reading. The point about akālika and sandiṭṭhika I fully agree with: Ps refers directly to rebirth and covers three life spans (at least more than one). Nonetheless, on some basic points I disagree. These points are prepared for in the previous article on anattā, with which article I even have more disagreement.

The main point is this: cause and effect are not just a succession of discreet entities, each of them ceasing entirely before the next takes place. The cause may pre-exist, but it nevertheless extends into the effect. Like this:



In other words there are three, not two, sankhatalakkanāni (marks of the determined). Now when it comes to consciousness we are told that we have to see the 'granular' nature of consciousness each microscopic moment ceasing before the next arise, and a slight misquotation is given (on p.13) from SN 47.42: "cittas arise and pass away". Actually the text says: "with the arising of nāmarūpa there is the arising of citta, with the cessation of nr there is cessation of citta". Actually what is arising and ceasing all the time is nāma (saññā, vedanā etc.). And according to this the nature of viññāna changes (now it is cakkuviññāna now it is manoviññāna – and that may be called 'granular'). But there is also more viññāna to support this, the underlying viññānasota without which there would be no experience. If scientists were to produce a perfect eye, yet without another element entering it there would be no seeing. This is why viññāna is a dhātu. There are five rūpadhātus and one viññānadhātu, but no nāmadhātus. This viññānasota can be apprehended in abhiññā experience, and is described as follows (DN28): "he apprehends (pajānāti) the stream of consciousness not-cut-off on both sides (i.e., it connects to past and future), established in this world and in the next". This is the non-arahat's consciousness. But even the ararhat's consciousness is still 'not-cut-off on both sides', only it is unestablished (in samsara). This is an important point, because it means that in order to see anattā we do not have to do away with all continuity. Continuity is not attā. What we must see is that continuity is changing, and attā wants to be something beyond changing. This is the delusion: a sort of 'super-continuity' mistakenly inferred from real continuity. This is why it is so difficult to see anattā. We have to see that the real continuity of consciousness does not itself imply an attā. This we can apprehended only when we understand that this consciousness cannot exist by itself, but must forever be bound to nāmarūpa (or at least nāma), which nāmarūpa is always changing and

therefore unsatisfactory. But note that the change is not only on the momentary level. There is momentary change, but at the same time (I know, this is what the Theravādins deny), there is also something unchanging. E.g.:



However, also that unchanging changes, but not now. If not before, then at death. Even then the change is not complete. However in the case of the Arahat the change is complete. So there is nothing that is not anicca. However cessation itself is not anicca in the sense of being irreversible. (It is better to say not anicca then to say nicca). All of this is anicca, the microscopic changes as well as the grosser changes. To say that the microscopic changes are the 'real anicca' (and that only by seeing that can we see anattā) makes it impossible for us to understand that real continuity nevertheless persists. On whatever level one is focusing the attention, microscopic or macroscopic, it is all equally anicca. There is no ultimate point of view. And it is possible to see anattā on all levels[1]. Even one must see it on all levels (without necessarily going into the extremes on both sides – if we grasp the middle portion we can rightly infer that however far we go on the 'big' or the 'small' side it will all have the same nature – there three marks of the conditioned.)

I could write a lot more about more particular disagreements with AB. What he says about the 'doer' and the 'knower', I do not fully agree with. But this would involve a lot more writing. So only the

[1] And that is why jhāna is not necessary for seeing anattā. All those large groups of lay people who became sotāpannas on first listening to the Buddha - would they have had jhāna?

main point is here being discussed. This may be sufficient to caution you about too enthusiastically accepting any interpretation of the Buddha Word, even if inspiringly presented. Having read and learned from the interpretation one returns to the uninterpreted Buddha Word, the inspirational power of which is inexhaustible.

So let this be enough. If there are particular points you may ask on a future meeting.

~ Ñānadīpa

2. A NOTE ON GOD

The concept of God is inherently contradictory.

1. If God created the world and man, the natural question that arises as a consequence is who created the God? What is the beginning of the God? Did he suddenly come out of nothing? Did Gods God create the God? Then who created the God's God?

2. If God created the universe (i.e., the world), where was he before that? He should be in somewhere. Was he in a larger universe and created this sub-universe? Then who was the creator of the larger universe? There should be a God to create the universe, but there should be a universe for the God to exist. So, which come first, the God or the universe? (Similar to: which come first, the chicken or the egg?)

3. If the world and the Man are creations of a supreme God, then they should function in the way God wanted them to function. It they don't function in the way he wants then there have been errors in the creation process and thus in the creator as well. Then he couldn't be omniscience and omnipotent, which means he is no God. It they function the way he wanted then definitely he is responsible for the earthquakes, floods, tsunamis, epidemics (like COVID 19), landslides, hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, snow storms, diseases and disease-causing bacteria and viruses, human cruelty etc. Doesn't this point to an evil creator? What happened to his 'Love'?

4. Man is said to be the apex of his creation, but there are so many diseases and problems with man's body and mind. Some are born disabled and apart from the diseases that spread by the means of bacteria and viruses there are so many other sicknesses occur in the body like cancer, heart attack, diabetes, haemorrhoids, rheumatism and mental illnesses like depression, anxiety etc. If his apex creation has so many problems, he indeed is a very bad creator, who couldn't create a body that doesn't get sick or old.

5. Even with these problems why couldn't he create them with some fairness? Why are some born rich while others in poverty? Why some have too much while others spend their days in hunger? Why are some beautiful while others ugly? Why do some live long while others die young? Why some are wise while others are foolish? Why some are healthy while others are prone to sicknesses?

6. Love is said to be the essence of God and he is said to be all compassionate. But when we look at the society what we see is misery; there are wars, riots, famine, sicknesses, people get born or become disabled, babies die etc. If he is compassionate, why couldn't he help them? Nay! He should prevent these from happening. But he hasn't. Then either he is not compassionate at all or if he is compassionate then he doesn't have the ability or power to act. This again means that he is no God!

7. If everything in the world happens according to the will of the God, then those things such as killings, torture, abuse, theft, adultery, raping, child abuse etc. happens because of his will. Then isn't he a blood thirsty lunatic? (Ñv quotes: 'The only excuse for God is that he doesn't exist' (the Rebel, p.58): p.471).

8. If God disapproves these, then we have to assume that there is a (or are) more powerful being (or beings -Human or divine) than God, who can act in contrary to God's wish. And before him God is helpless and God cannot stop him. Then again God is no God.

9. If Satan is behind these things why did God create him in the first place? Couldn't God know earlier that Satan would eventually disobey him? Or couldn't he create Satan in a way that Satan couldn't disobey him? Doesn't this again prove his failure as a creator? When Satan turned out be a bad person, why couldn't he make Satan a good person again? Does this mean that he doesn't have the power to do so? Or is he afraid of Satan? Isn't he supposed be omnipotent? Why couldn't he stop Satan and make the world a better place? Is it because he needs Satan for his survival?

10. There has always been good are bad in the world. So, when the God was allocated with the good, the need arose of a someone to whom the bad can be allocated to. So, the concept of Satan came to be. So, for the God to exist a Satan was needed, for Satan to exist a God was needed. God depends on Satan for his survival; Satan needs God for his survival. There cannot be a God without Satan; there cannot be a Satan without God. God and Satan are nothing but the opposite sides of the same coin.

11. When the age of the universe is considered, man has been on earth for not more than several seconds. What was God doing for billions and billions of years without creating his best creation? Was he waiting for man to evolve naturally and later claim: 'I created man'?

12. When Darwin's theory of evolution became widely accepted, those who propounded 'divine creation' had to accept it and to change

their mode of divine creation to: 'God evolved man, he created man from ape' (In other words he could not create man directly). But even this, scientists have refuted with proof. It God created man from the ape, then the evolution of man from ape should be linear. But in the law of natural evolution, the evolution take place in the form of a tree where branches indicate various creatures, those who are successful would survive, others will die out. With archaeological proof scientists have shown that this too was the case with human evolution. The evolution of humans has taken place as of a tree; unsuccessful humans have got extinct (e.g., Homo habilis, Homo erectus, Homo neanderthalensis). It is also known as a fact that Neanderthals were living with Home Sapiens on earth during the same period of time. So, Homo sapiens did not evolve from H. neanderthalensis and Neanderthals got extinct altogether.

13. Another idea that has come up with the God concept is that those who would not believe in God are destined to be tortured in the hell fire for eternity. When all the humans that roamed on earth are considered only a fraction of them have believed in a creative God. While even the most cruel can go to heaven just because he happens to believe in God (even after a sojourn in purgatory), the good people in other creeds and those unfortunates who were unable to hear the "good massage" were to be burnt eternally in hell is something that a person with a sound mind cannot swallow.

14. Another ritual that has developed with the God concept is the praying for the dead. Since everything happen according to the wish of the God, it is by his sole decision that it is decided whether the dead person would go to heaven or hell. In this ritual, relations of the dead would pray to God to forgive the deceased of his wrong

doings and to admit him to heaven. In *Asibandhaka sutta* (SN IV, 8.1.16, 567) Buddha ridicule this idea:

> "Suppose, headman, a person would hurl a huge boulder into a deep pool of water. Then a great crowd of people would come together and assemble around it, and they would send up prayers and recite praise and circumambulate it making reverential salutations, saying: 'Emerge, good boulder! Rise up, good boulder! Come up on to high ground, good boulder!' What do you think, headman? Because of the prayers of the great crowd of people, because of their praise, because they circumambulate it making reverential salutations, would that boulder emerge, rise up, and come up on to high ground?"
>
> "No, venerable sir."
>
> "So, too, headman, if a person is one who destroys life, takes what is not given, engages in sexual misconduct, speaks falsely, speaks divisively, speaks harshly, chatters idly, one who is covetous, full of ill will, and holds wrong view, even though a great crowd of people would come together and assemble around him , and they would send up prayers and recite praise and circumambulate him making reverential salutations, saying: 'With the breakup of the body, after death, may this person be reborn in a good destination, in a heavenly world.' still, with the breakup of the body, after death, that person will be reborn in a state of misery, in a bad destination, in the nether world, in hell.
>
> "Suppose, headman, a man submerges a pot of ghee or a pot of oil in a deep pool of water and breaks it. Any of its shards or fragments there would sink downwards, but the ghee or oil would rise upwards. Then a great crowd of people would come together and assemble around it, and they would send up prayers and recite praise and circumambulate it making reverential salutations, saying: 'Sink down, good ghee or oil! Settle good ghee

or oil! Go downwards, good ghee or oil!' What do you think, headman? Because of the prayers of the great crowd of people, because of their praise, because they circumambulate it making reverential salutations, would that ghee or oil sink down or settle or go downwards?"

"No, venerable sir."

"So, too, headman, if a person is one who abstains from the destruction of life, from taking what is not given, from sexual misconduct, from false speech, from divisive speech, from harsh speech, from idle chatter, one who is not covetous, without ill will, who holds right view, even though a great crowd of people would come together and assemble around him, and they would send up prayers and recite praise and circumambulate him making reverential salutations, saying: 'With the breakup of the body, after death, may this person be reborn in a state of misery, in a bad destination, in the nether world, in hell.' still, with the breakup of the body, after death, that person will be reborn in a good destination, in a heavenly world."

15. It the God created man and the world then everything should be predestined. Prof. K.N. Jayatilleke writes:

"As philosophers have pointed out, God's omniscience and omnipotence strictly imply a rigid, deterministic universe. God being omniscient sees the entire future in all its aspects and details. It is unlike human foreknowledge, which is only probable. So, the future of the creature is strictly mapped out and God can see it as in the reel of a film. God being omnipotent is entirely responsible for it as well, so that a belief in free will on the part of his creatures is merely illusory.

In the *Sandaka Sutta*, the Buddha says that there are four types of religion which are false in this world and four types which are unsatisfactory though not necessarily totally false, distinguishing Buddhism from all eight of them.

Two of the types condemned as false refer to two forms of theism. One is the doctrine that salvation is not due to human effort or the moral causation effected by good or evil deeds but that people are miraculously saved or doomed presumably because of the grace or will of God. The other is the doctrine of predestination or theistic evolutionism.

There are two main arguments against theism presented in the early Canonical texts. The first may be called the Puppet Argument and is stated as follows: “If God designs the life of the entire world - the glory and the misery, the good and the evil acts - man is but an instrument of his will (*niddesa-kari*) and God (alone) is responsible” (J-a V 238).

Theists who do not take a “predestinarian” stand (which is logically consistent) try to evade this conclusion by saying that God has endowed man with free will. But it can be shown that the concept of divine providence is not compatible with a notion of human freedom.

Professor Antony Flew states one of his conclusions with regard to this matter as follows: “The stock image is that of a Supreme Father showing long-suffering tolerance towards his often rebellious children; he has given us, it is said, our freedom; and we - wretched unworthy creatures that we are - too often take advantage to flout his wishes. If this image fitted, there

would be no problem. Obviously, it is possible for children to act against their parents' wishes. It is also possible for parents to grant to their children freedom, which may be abused, by refusing to exercise powers of control which they do possess. But the case of Creator and creature must be utterly different. Here the appropriate images, in so far as any images could be appropriated, would be that of the Creator, either as the Supreme Puppet Master with creatures whose every thought and move he arranges or as the Great Hypnotist with subjects who always act out his irresistible suggestions. What makes the first image entirely inept, and the other two much less so, is crucially that God is supposed to be, not a manufacturer or a parent who may make or rear his product and then let it be, but the Creator. This precisely means that absolutely nothing happens save by his ultimate undetermined determination and with his consenting ontological support. Everything means everything; and that includes every human thought, every human action and every human choice. For we too are indisputably parts of the universe, we are among the "all things both visible and invisible" of which he is supposed to be "the Maker and Preserver" (*God and Philosophy*, Hutchinson & Co. Ltd., 1966, p. 44).

His final conclusion is the same as what I mentioned above. In his own words: "For it is, as we have argued already, entirely inconsistent to maintain: both that there is a Creator; and that there are other authentically autonomous beings" (ibid. p. 54). A careful study of the theistic texts of any tradition will show that often this is directly admitted in certain contexts, despite the contradictions in other places.

The second argument against theism found in the Canonical texts is the argument from evil. It proceeds on the presumption that if the world is created by God, then certain evils are inexplicable. It has several variants but if we take some of them together: "If God (Brahma) is Lord of the whole world and creator of the multitude of beings, then why (i) has he ordained misfortune in the world without making the whole world happy, or (ii) for what purpose has he made the world full of injustice, deceit, falsehood and conceit or (iii) the Lord of creation is evil in that he pre-ordained injustice when there could have been justice" (J VI 208).

Even when we take the arguments for theism in a modern context, we find that the ontological argument was a mere definition, which mistakenly regarded existence as an attribute. The cosmological argument contradicted its own premise by speaking of an uncaused cause or using the word "cause" in a non-significant sense. The argument from Design, which is superficially the most appealing, flounders when we consider the waste and cruelty of evolution, with nature "red in tooth and claw." It is impossible to contemplate that a loving God could have created and watched the spectacle of dinosaurs tearing each other to pieces for millions of years on earth.

In order to reconcile divine love with the apparent cruelty of nature, a move that is often made by theists is to say that God's love is inscrutable or is another mystery. A human parent would do whatever he could to relieve the suffering of his child who is in great pain. Would an omnipotent and omniscient being look on without intervention? To say that such a being exists is to equate his love with callousness or cruelty. In such a situation we would

not know what meaning to attach to the concept of "love" considered as an attribute of God. This has led theists to say that God's attributes as well as his nature are inconceivable. The *Bodhicaryavatara* makes a *reductio ad absurdum* of this contention arguing that in such a case the concept of a God or creator is meaningless: "If, as theists say, God is too great for man to be able to comprehend him, then it follows that his qualities also surpass our range of thought, and that we neither know him nor attribute to him the quality of a creator." It follows that if normal meanings are given to the words all-knowing, all-powerful and infinitely good (or analogous meanings), the evidence points against God's existence whereas if this is not done, the concept becomes meaningless.

With regard to theism, it may be held that it has given people a sense of security and inspired them to various kinds of activity. This does not prove that the belief is true but suggests that it may be useful. A realistic survey would show that while beliefs in theism have done some good, they have brought much evil in their train as well.

- *Facets of Buddhist Thought, Six essays by K.N.Jayatilleke*, (The wheel publication No 162/163/164), BPS, Kandy, 1984

16. Regarding Prof. Palay's watch argument Max Ladner writes:

"About 150 years ago, W. Paley, Professor of Theology at Cambridge, presented in one of his books the famous "clock" argument, which he intended to be irrefutable proof of the existence of a Creator-God. It runs as follows:

"Wherever we find orderliness and meaningful arrangement, made to serve definite purpose, we can be reasonably certain that these owe their origin to the workings of an intelligent being. Supposing we look at a clock. From its ingenious mechanism we are led to the conclusion that it must have been put together by a master of his craft, who knew its purpose and constructed the mechanism accordingly. The different parts of the clock could not have come into being by themselves nor could they have assembled themselves. And if we assume that the clock has been so ingeniously constructed that it could even reproduce its own kind, - our admiration for the craftsman's skill would be boundless. The world we live in is far more ingeniously constructed than a mere clock. It stands to reason, therefore, it must have had a creator."

What is to be said of this argument'? Does it actually present cogent proof for the existence of a creator? We shall see.

A clock may be of excellent workmanship and run accurately, or it may be poorly constructed and not at all dependable. The clock-maker who produces a time-piece of the highest order deserves praise for his handiwork, whereas the less skilled mechanic lays himself open to criticism and ridicule; it would have been better had he kept his hands off his work altogether.

This world of ours is certainly wonderfully constructed and it seems - at first sight, at least - that every part in it manifests order and purpose. But to call this world **perfect** is open to serious doubt. When we look at MAN, the apex and crown of creation, on every side we see him exposed to ruin and destruction. Of this there is further an abundance of horrible examples in nature: plants and trees in their struggle for air and light are choked to

death by parasitical growths. Animals feed on animals, stalking and devouring each other. Human beings are suffering from incurable diseases, insanity, pain, misery, famine and inescapable death. There is enmity, hatred, bloodshed and war. There are epidemics, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions. To speak of a "perfect" world in the face of this catalogue of horrors betrays only lack of insight and an immature mind.

And how are we to explain the riddle of an all-knowing Creator whose very essence is said to be Love, to have brought forth so much suffering and cruelty, such palpable imperfections, incongruities and shortcomings? To which only one answer can be given: either he could not do it any other way or he did not want to. In the first case he is powerless, in the second he must be held responsible for the untold miseries his own creatures have to endure. As the creator of such a world he must be condemned; as the originator of human and animal suffering he bears the distinctive mark of an evil demon.

Paley's argument, in fact, is a classical example of false reasoning. To build a clock a clock-maker needs a great variety of materials. He cannot make the clock out of nothing. Therefore a world-creator could not have fashioned the universe without pre-existing matter. The material elements, called solids, liquids, fiery and gaseous, how were they created? Out of nothing? Or by magic? And who created primeval matter? Another creator?—and from what?

A second theory of creation has been proposed, which appears in a philosophical garb and has been called the Doctrine of Emanation. The exponents of this theory consider the universe as having issued from the essence of God whereby the

unfathomable essence of God remained unchanged. Aside from the fact that such an assumption is quite gratuitous and arbitrary, the question of the purpose and the meaning of such an emanation remains unanswered. Still more, what were the reasons or motives behind such an out-flowing? Of this we cannot have any knowledge. Any argument advanced to support the emanation theory lacks a sound foundation in fact and is not verifiable.

Can we imagine the same clock-maker who—as in a dream—conjures up the steel for the spindles, the silver or gold for the casing—out of nothing? Such an incredible feat of magic not even Professor Paley could have been able to conceive. And what he never would credit a clockmaker with, *that* he expects of a being he does not even know and of which he cannot have the slightest conception. By way of analogy, taking his and the clock-maker's existence as a starting point, he draws from it the inference that, like the clock, man and the world, too, must have a maker.

It goes without saying that to construct a perfect clock requires above all—apart from technical skill—a clear mind and consciousness. Consciousness, however, does not function without a bodily organism; a free—floating consciousness, without some kind of physical substratum, is unthinkable. Furthermore, consciousness implies purposive thinking or planning. Consequently, the assumed world-creator must be endowed with a consciousness to plan and to execute his ideas. In other words, he would have to be thought of as being equipped with a kind of bodily organism through which alone his consciousness could function.

This leads again to the question about the nature and origin of the physical substance through which the creator's consciousness functions, and further to the question who the creator of the creator is, and so on *ad infinitum*. Whence it follows how poorly Professor Paley's argument has been thought-out, which was demonstrated by following it through to its absurd consequences.

There is a tendency in human beings to interpret each and everything according to one's own needs; it is no easy task to disabuse oneself of the mistaken idea that every single event must have a "meaning" and a "purpose." In human life situations arise sometimes that create the impression of a higher power at work, or of an intelligence superior to our own. This leads to the mistaken idea of a super-human agency, or some mysterious, divine guiding—power behind the scene, leading everything to its preordained destination. Hereby one fundamental fact is almost always overlooked, that man finds himself, like any other living being, in a set of circumstances to which he adapts himself. And likewise, in accordance to which his behaviour patterns develop. The decisive factor here is anything but the wisdom and understanding of a world creator. This is a specific human situation with its problems and challenges; and it remains the noble task of serious research to find order in the tangled web of human volitions.

Man instinctively rebels against the idea that life has no meaning or purpose whatsoever. But as so often, here too, man overlooks the obvious, i.e. that it is only man's prerogative to endow his acts with meaning and purpose. In this respect man always undervalues himself when, instead of facing the inevitable,

he tries to find comfort in a divine intelligence. There is no single fact in nature to support such a belief. Besides, nature cares nothing about man's happiness or misery. Thus the endless quest for the why's and wherefore's of existence continues. This is a far cry from Prof. Paley's way of thinking. The solution has been found: it can be gained from the teaching of the Exalted One, from the Doctrine of the Buddha, who, two and one half thousand years ago, found Enlightenment under the Bodhi-tree."

Einsicht , Vol. 7 No. 9.

German Buddhist writers-An anthology, (The wheel publication No.74-75), BPS, Kandy, 1984

All these facts direct us to a single conclusion: "the God didn't create man, but man created God."